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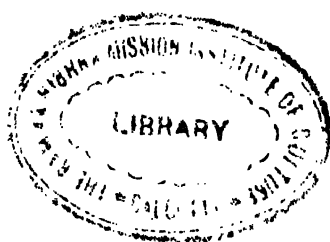




# The Vedanta Kesari

"LET THE LION OF VEDANTA ROAR"

VOL. XII



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# THE VEDANTA KESARI

"Let the lion of Vedanta roar."

"Let me tell you, strength, strength is what we want  
And the first step in getting strength is to uphold  
The Upanishads and believe that 'I am the Atman.'"

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

VOLUME XLII

MAY 1925

[NUMBER 1]

## GOSPEL OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA\*

**[**It was Tuesday, the 5th day of June of the year 1883. M. had been staying in the Dakshineswar Temple in the company of Sri Ramakrishna for the last two days. Sundays were generally crowded with visitors. On that day, therefore, there were no visitors to the Master. Only Rakhal, M., and Hazra were present.

After dinner, the Master began to tell them of those days of his Sadhana when Love of God swept over his soul like a cyclone and carried him off into a divine madness. He said :

"On the states I passed through ! I would not take my food here. I would enter a Brahman's house at Baranagore, Dakshineswar or Ariadah in an unearthly hour, sit down mute except when I was asked what I wanted. Then I would simply say, 'I'll eat here' and become silent again. Sometimes I went to the house of Ram Chatterji at Alambazar or of the Savarna Choudhries at Dakshineswar. In the latter place, however, I never relished my food.....it somehow had a fishy smell.

"One day I became very importunate that I should be taken to Davendranath Tagore. I said to Sejo Babut, 'I

\*Translated from the Diary of M., a disciple, published originally in Bengali.

†Mathuranath, son-in-law of Rani Rasnani, and extremely devoted to the Master.

want to see Devendranath Tagore who is a great devotee. Will you take me to him ?' Sejo Babu was a proud man—he could not go uninvited to anybody—he hesitated. At last he said, 'Yes, myself and Devendra have been class-mates once. Come, *Baba*, I'll take you.'

"Once I heard of one Dinu Mukherji who was a very good man and devotee, and lived by the Baghbazaar bridge. I urged on Sejo Babu to take me to him, and what could he do but comply ? Mukherji's house was small, and when Sejo Babu's splendid equipage stopped at its door, both Mukherji and ourselves felt much embarrassed. It so happened that Mukherji was celebrating at that time the *Upanayana*\* ceremony of his son ; there was no room into which he could welcome us. We were going to enter a side room, but he exclaimed, 'Please do not go there, there are ladies there.' We felt much ashamed. While returning, Sejo Babu said, '*Baba*, I won't listen to you any more.' I began to laugh.

"Ah, those were really blessed states ! Kumar Singh, wishing to feast Saithus, invited me to his house. When I arrived there, there were already many Saithus assembled. When I sat down, they began to question me, 'Are you a *Puri* or *Giri* ?' 'What is the *Pares mantram* ?' But I at once got up and went to sit apart, for I thought, 'Why all this bother ?' When we were called to the meal, I began to eat unceremoniously without waiting for the word, and heard some of them saying indignantly, 'Oh, what is this ?' "

#### KARMA AND DIVINE WILL

In the evening at five, the Master was sitting on the stairs along the southern corridor of his room. Rakhal, M., and Hazra were sitting near him.

Hazra's spiritual outlook was that he was Brahman Himself—'*Soham*'. The Master said to him, "Yes, this harmonises all things. It is He who is both a theist and an atheist, good and evil, existence and non-existence; sleep and wakefulness are His states ; He again transcends them all.

"A farmer once had a son, when he was advanced in age. Naturally he doted on the child. In course of time, the child grew up to a boy. One day, as the farmer was working in his field, the word was brought to him that his son was taken seriously ill and lay dying. When he returned home, he found that he had already expired and his wife

\*Investiture with the sacred thread.

was lamenting loudly, but he did not shed any tears. This much aggrieved the wife who began to complain to her neighbours of his callousness at not feeling the least over the death of their excellent son. After a long time, the man said to his wife, 'Do you know why I do not cry? Last night I dreamt that I was a king, father of seven princes all of whom were well adorned with various graces of person and mind. They grew up to age, growing in knowledge and virtue, and then . . . I woke up! I am at a loss to know whether I should lament the loss of this one son or those seven sons!' According to the Jains, the dream state is much the same as the waking state. 'God alone is the doer and whatever happens, happens through 'His will'."

*Hazra* : But it is very difficult to understand it. The Sadhu of Blukailash was actually tortured to death. He had been found immersed in Samadhi and being alternately buried in the earth, dipped in water, and branded in the body. He was brought down to normal consciousness. All these tortures eventually caused his death. Thus his death was due both to the tortures and the will of God.

*Sri K.* As one sows, so one reaps; but it was through the Divine Will that the Sadhu died. The *Acviral*, when he prepares *Nikaradhruja*, puts gold and other ingredients in a bottle, coats the latter with earth and keeps it in fire. On account of the heat, the metal combines with the other ingredients to form the medicine. He then breaks the bottle carefully and separates the medicine; what is the further use of the bottle? Thus, men think that the Sadhu was killed, but perhaps his 'thing' had been already made and what does it matter whether the body survived God-realisation or not? The Blukailash Sadhu was immersed in Samadhi. Well, Samadhi is of many kinds. My experience of it quite agreed with its description given by a Sadhu from Haridikesh. Sometimes I find 'the vital air' coursing up within my body, creeping like an ant, sometimes like a monkey leaping from branch to branch, and again like a fish. He alone knows who has experienced it. All consciousness of the world is obliterated. After Samadhi, when my mind comes down a little, I pray to the Mother, 'Mother, make me whole, I want to be quite well. O Mother, I want to talk!'<sup>\*</sup> Unless one is an Iswara-

<sup>\*</sup>This was one of the ways by which the Master used to bring his mind down from the Absolute Consciousness to the Relative Plane.

koti (such as the Divine Incarnations) one does not come back from Samadhi. A few *Jivas* may realise Samadhi through strenuous Sadhana, but they cannot return. Only when the Lord comes down as a man,—incarnates Himself and holds the key to man's salvation in his hands, does He come back from Samadhi for the good of the mankind.

*M. (to himself) :* Does the Master then possess the key to man's salvation ?

*Hazra (to the Master) :* It is enough if we can please Him. It does not matter if there is Divine Incarnation or not.

*Sri R. (smiling) :* Yes, yes, the chief Registration Office is at Vishnupur. If you register your documents there, you will suffer no trouble at Goghat\*.

#### THE MASTER AND THE DISCIPLE

The darkness of the new moon night slowly descended on earth. In the Shiva, Vishnu and Kali temples, the holy *aratrikam* (Vesper Service) was being performed to the accompaniment of the auspicious sounds of conches and bells. A dense gloom which was slightly relieved by the temple lights enveloped the garden, and the dark shadowy sky was dimly mirrored in the bosom of the Bhagirathi. It was the night of *Amavasya*, intensely dark, which rendered intenser the mood of the Master's mind ever filled with divine feelings : the Master repeated the sacred syllable 'Om' from time to time, and the holy names of the Divine Mother. . . . It was very hot inside the Master's room. A mat was spread on the veranda. He lay down on it, talking whisperingly with M. He said "Do you know, God can be *seen*†. So-and-so has seen Him ; but do not tell it to any one. His form, and formlessness,—which do you prefer ?"

*M. :* Sir, I am at present rather inclined to His formless aspect. But I am gradually coming to see that all those forms are also His.

*Sri R. :* I say, will you drive me over to Mati Seal's *jhilt* at Betgharia ? If you throw some puffed rice into the water, shoals of fish will come to eat it, and what a joy it will be to

\*It is a branch registration office under Vishnupur which is an ancient town situated near the Master's native village.

†A sort of lake.

see them sporting ! The sight will inspire you with the feeling of the soul playing like a fish in the ocean of Satchidananda. Standing in a vast field also, you will have a similar feeling,—you will feel like a fish, which was shut up in a pot and has been let loose in a pond.

" Practice of Sadhana is essential for God-realisation. I had to practise very hard. How many kinds of Sadhana did I undergo in the *Beltala* ! I would lie down under the trees crying for the vision of the Mother, and tears would flow over my body ! "

M. : How hard have you not practised ! Can men hope to realise Him in a trice ? Can we raise a wall simply by drawing an airy wall with the finger round the house ?

Sri R. (*smiling*) : Anurita says that if one kindles a fire, ten others can warm themselves at it. And there is another thing,—it is well to abide in the *Lila*, the Relative, after realising the *Nirya*, the Absolute.

M. : You have said that the *Lila* is only for enjoyment.

Sri R. : No, the *Lila* also is true. And mark you, whenever you come here, bring something with you. I myself should not tell you so, it evokes the ego consciousness. I ask Adhar Sen also to bring a piece worth of anything, and also Bhavanath to bring a piece worth of betel leaf. Have you observed how devotional Bhavanath is ? He and Narendra are, as it were, a conjugal pair,—he is very much attached to Narendra. Will you bring Narendra in a carriage one day, and bring some sweets ? It will do you great good.

" Both Jnana and Bhakti are means to God-realisation. In the path of devotion, you have specially to observe ceremonial purity. In the path of knowledge, any lapse in such purity is compensated of itself : even a plantain tree is easily consumed by fire when it burns ablaze.

" The way of the Jnani is that of philosophy ; and in the course of philosophising, atheistic tendencies may sometimes prevail. But if the devotee is sincere in his search for God, he does not give up God-contemplation in spite of such atheism ; one who is farmer by heredity does not cease cultivating even in a season of drought. "

## "THINK NATURALLY OF YOURSELF"

[Notes of a Class Talk]

SWAMI RAMAKRISHNANANDA

**T**HE permanent state of all living beings is calmness. Whenever any one fluctuates from that state one becomes restless and struggles hard to regain the lost balance. What is calmness? Calmness and sameness are synonymous. Calmness means changelessness. When you change from one condition to another in rapid succession you are said to be perfectly restless. But when you remain in the same condition without any change whatever, you are said to be perfectly calm. Calmness and sameness are thus one, and is known as the monistic consciousness.

Let us substitute the words 'birth' and 'death' for 'change,'—for change means death of one condition and birth of another,—we find that the state of restlessness is one of birth and death, and absolute rest, calmness or peace is birthless, deathless and eternal. Hence our natural state is eternal, and that is why we hate death so much. But the moment we step out of our true nature, we grow anxious, restless, and all sorts of false thoughts invade our mind, and we get afraid of disease, death and thousand other anxious circumstances.

This fall from the original glory, this forgetfulness of one's true nature, this stepping out from the eternal into the ephemeral, is the mystery and pain of life. How is it, do you ask, that you have forgotten your blissful, all-knowing, all-powerful, eternal, infinite nature, and identified yourself with a finite and changeful being, subject to birth and death, fears and anxieties? The answer is: "Because you have been thinking unnaturally about yourself. It is because you have been identifying yourself with the body for ages and ages,—

you have been thinking so poorly about yourself. There is a Spanish proverb, “ He who lives with dogs will learn to bark.” According to your associations, will your manhood grow, and you have been in the bad habit of thinking all false thoughts about yourself for ever so long ! The struggle against this bad habit, the struggle against those false thoughts, is real, practical religion. Religion can never be theoretical. A man may say, “ I am eternal, perfect, infinite,” yet if he has not realised it, his professions are mere sound and nothing else. To know and to become,—that is religion.

Practical religion is that which enables you to wage an incessant war against your unnatural way of thinking. The idea that you are Mr. So-and-so, that you are short or tall, dark or fair, happy or miserable, is all false. You are nameless and formless, birthless and deathless, eternally blissful and above all miseries. You have taken such a big jump out of your natural condition into the unnatural, that you are now in utter darkness. You have so absolutely forgotten your true nature and identified yourself with your apparent one, that you are thinking yourself just the opposite of what you really are. And the only way out of this muddle is renunciation of your false nature, giving up all these false ideas. Tell yourself : “ This landed property does not belong to me, this wife and these children are not mine. This body even is not mine. I am beyond body and mind, beyond time and space, beyond birth and death, I am all-perfect, all-full, all-good. No anxiety can ever come to me, no misery can ever come to me, no disease death can ever touch me. I am there where no fear has access, where no pain has access, where no anxiety can ever enter. I am infinitely happy, infinitely secure, infinitely perfect. How glorious I am ! No name can be given to me. I am not man nor God, nor a Brahmin, neither rich nor poor. Nothing can qualify me. I am without limitation or quality. When I am, nothing

else exists. Beside myself, nothing else can be. I am the past, the present and the future. I am one and I have become many. And all things that exist are only myself in so many forms.”

This is what is called realisation, emancipation, ‘onlyness.’ You shall have to realise it, and in so far as you realise it in this life, you truly exist. If you fail to realise it in this life, you will have to be born again and again. All weakness must be conquered. Truth is never realised by the weak. Throw away all these false notions that you are tall or short, fair or dark, man or woman. Do you remember while you sleep that you are tall or short, man or woman? No, then you are calm, peaceful, self-existent. That which you realise involuntarily, learn to realise voluntarily.

As Hanuman cleared the Strait of Mannar, so do you jump over the Strait of Illusion, and fall at the feet of Sita, the Eternal Wisdom. Otherwise you will have to remain on this side with the monkies. You must have the strength of Hanuman! What made him, a monkey, so great? It was his faith in his Divine nature. He said, “Why shall I remain here? Let me go there where I shall find my true nature.” So he found his true self, while the others were left in ignorance.

You must cross this ocean of *Samsara*. Otherwise you are not worth the name of man. The more you analyse yourself, the more you understand yourself, the more you realise your infinite nature. Then these little ambitions of yours, these little troubles of yours, will seem too small for you. This little life will no longer be able to hold you. These little thoughts of money, name and fame will appear too insignificant. You must see the littleness of everything, and you will no longer find satisfaction in your finite condition. Say: “All these little things are too insignificant for me who am infinite.” Thus think little of your

finite knowledge, your social power, your wealth. Think : “ These are not for me, these are intended for the deluded, for limited beings. But I am limitless and I must go beyond this life to satisfy my infinite hunger. ”

If you remain satisfied with finitude, do you know what awaits you ?—Innumerable deaths. You have seen man die. What agony ! Such pain will be yours again and again till you realise your infinite nature. The key to unlock the door of infinity is in your own hand ; but you are like the man who went about seeking for his necklace until some one came and told him that it was round his own neck. In the same way, some one must point out to you that your ‘ necklace ’ is there, that what you are searching for, you have already, and that some one is the Guru. He reminds you that you cannot be born, you cannot die, that you are eternal and infinite.

The secret of discovering the glory of your true self is with you. Apply it. Be not led away by the senses. You have sunk your wisdom in the quagmire of sensuality, therefore you are miserable. Beware of sensuality. The senses are in your way. The wayward mind, the body, all stand in your way. They have deceived you. They have enslaved you. It is because you feel like a slave, therefore you yield. The cause of delusion is sensuality. Do not therefore let your senses rule you. Do not let the mind rule over you. The army should not be allowed to lead the commander, then the battle is sure to be lost. It is the commander that should lead the army. Be the commander of your senses. Be the commander of your mind. Make them obey you absolutely. Be their master. Unlock the shrine of infinite bliss, then will you enjoy the treasures of infinite life, bliss and wisdom.

SWAMI RAMAKRISHNANANDA

# SWAMI VIVEKANANDA : THE MESSAGE OF HIS LIFE\*

BY

SWAMI PRAKASHANANDA

**T**HIS morning I am going to speak to you about one whom some of you might have seen, with whom some of you might have come in touch—that great founder of the Vedānta movement in the Western world. The name of Swami Vivekananda is well known everywhere ; many of you may have read his life ; many of you may be familiar with his utterances compiled in several volumes ; but I am going to place before you the salient points of his Life Message. I may not be able to do justice to the greatness of his work, I may not have the adequate power of expression ; his life was so many-sided, covering such a vast field of wisdom and knowledge, that I may not do it full justice. Yet I consider it my privilege to speak to you of a life which should be a benefit to all.

His life was devoted to the service of humanity and he worked in different countries to give out his message. Once he wrote reprovingly to one of his American disciples, because some had referred to his duty in life. I want to quote those few words : they will give you a glimpse into his heart and an insight into the broad, vast expansiveness of that life : “ I have no duty under the sun ; I finished all my duties in life when I realised my oneness with the Divine Spirit but I have a message to give to the world and I will give that message in my own way. I will neither Christianize it, nor Hinduize it ; I will Myize it.”

You may belong to different religions and different faiths, but here is presented the study of a man who rose to a height of understanding and illumination where all faiths cease to be mere faiths, where faiths and ideas become actualities, realities, experienced facts ; he rose to that height of wisdom which is the goal of all faiths and religions and from that height of realization he gave out his message. He did not give any narrow term to it, which would make it sectarian ; that is

\*Delivered at the Hindu Temple, San Francisco, California, U. S. A., on 18th January, 1925, at 63rd Birthday of our illustrious Swami Vivekananda.

why he did not call it a Hindu message, or a Christian message, nor a message for any particular sect. He called it by that broad name—"Vedanta"—because that word means "the end of wisdom": from *Veda*, meaning wisdom and *anta*, the end. That is the goal of all religions, all faiths ; the attainment of that is the goal of our very life. So it makes no difference whatever, what religion we are brought up in or what we are following—our goal is that.

The study of the life message of this great soul will benefit all of us and that is why we celebrate his birthday. Many may say, why should we celebrate his birthday, is it not bordering on man-worship, or idol-worship ? No, there is no such thing as that in reality. There is an ideal worship, however, each one of us needs an Ideal and a different Ideal for each ; because what is good for one is not good or needed by another. Man can only understand man, and no matter how much you talk of God, or the Absolute, no matter how much you may philosophize or imagine you are following the impersonal ideal of God, in your heart of hearts, so long as you are human, so long as you are a man in the world of men, so long as your ideas and thoughts are in the realm of relativity, you cannot extricate yourself from some definite human ideal. That is why the memory of such ideal lives is always necessary, elevating and uplifting; it revives us and puts a new interest in our search for truth. In the midst of the hurry and confusion of the day, in the midst of keen competition and struggle, in our pursuit of the many ordinary ideals of life, we lose interest, we lack enthusiasm, we make our lives dry and monotonous. The study of even mythical characters is good and helpful, but when we come in touch with a life passed amongst us, who was as real as we are, who struggled as we struggle, and who rose above the strife and attained wisdom, there a new interest is created—then a fresh spirit of hankering comes to our soul and we look upward and are ready to go onward in our struggle : that is the spirit of worship. Worship means to make our life worthy. When we seek the Divine, we go to a place of worship, or enter into our inner sanctuary, and try to think of the Divine Ideal ; and thus we rouse and unfold the spiritual in us. The true spirit of worship is remembrance of the Ideal through sincere and earnest effort, howsoever insignificant it may be; it is an effort on the part of the individual to be worthy of the Ideal—to be united with the ideal by placing

before him the ideal of a godly life. From such a standpoint the worship is done and so worship has been found to be necessary in the life of every individual.

There are two types of men who do not worship. One is the perfect man who has risen to that oneness with the Divine : he does not need worship because he has made his life complete and full. Yet it has been found in the lives of the perfect souls that, in order to set an example to others and lead them in the right direction, they also follow the path of worship. At the other pole of existence, there is the savage man, the man of no intellect—the idiot steeped in darkness ; he does not worship because he has not unfolded ; he has not been awakened yet out of his sleep. But those of us who are on the intermediate planes need worship so long as we are not perfect. Being in a state of struggle and ignorance, we need knowledge and higher ideals as we go on in life. This is the ideal worship which we all need. With that spirit we ought to study this life, not only for our own good, but for the good of all. And so this morning I want to put before you a few of the principal ideas of his life message. I may not be able to do it properly, but if you try to understand knowledge will unfold in your heart.

First of all, his life was divided into two parts. By studying his life you will see that the first part was devoted to inquiry, to study, to the gaining of culture and to the search for Divine wisdom. His was a brilliant career in the University ; he was a great conversationalist ; he was a great artist and musician ; his genius worked through various channels, finding expression in different ways. If some of you had known and come in close touch with him, you would have been amazed at the way he could speak with authority on any subject he would take up ; but he sacrificed his promising public career, sacrificed everything, in order that he might attain to the Divine wisdom and devote himself to the service of humanity. Following in the footsteps of God-men, such as his teacher and master, Sri Ramakrishna, or great souls like Buddha and Christ, he renounced everything for the sake of Divine knowledge and the good of mankind. The majority of us cannot accomplish this at once, but we can approach it gradually in our little way. We may be steeped in ignorance and at the same time we may have many duties in life, so that we cannot cut off the many ties, throw overboard our worldly ambitions, but

we, like him, can make that the uppermost, predominating characteristic in life—this search and craving for Divine wisdom, love for God and service to our fellow-beings. In this way he lived his early life.

Once he came in contact with a great sage of the day, who, either to test Swami Vivekananda's determination and devotion, or judging from his own limited standpoint, said : " You are going to renounce everything; do you not know that all these ideals taught by God-men and sages from time immemorial cannot be actually put into practice in this world of activity; do you not know that the true renunciation cannot be done properly ? To a certain extent it may be done, but not fully." The face of the aspirant, the devoted student, shone with inspiration and he replied : " Sir, if no one has ever been able to do it perfectly, I will be the first man to do it." Such determination was in the heart of Swami Vivekananda.

This should serve as an example to us. We always wait for others, we always depend on others ; we want to see if others are getting somewhere and, really, we cannot accomplish anything that way. We must have the determination that we are going to do it. Thus the world has seen that a man of such unflagging zeal, a man of such ready sacrifice, was able to become great in the spiritual life. Such was the beginning of the life of this great man and we can always utilize such lessons in our life ; and a life-message like this may bring us to a turning point in our varied fields of activity. He studied especially under the guidance of the great Master Sri Ramakrishna about whom you have heard. And guided by the light of his instructions, and Divine life, the Swami attained to great realization ; his soul was illumined ; then he became aware of the message for which Sri Ramakrishna had chosen and prepared him to deliver. He did not give out his message until he was certain of his course. We are always, as it were, jumping at the first opportunity to teach ; out of egoism we are confident we can teach others, but his was the dominant idea that one is not able to teach until one has learned. As the Master used to say : " We get teachers by the hundreds, but one really genuine, sincere and earnest student we cannot get."

Without looking backward, without having consideration for anything else he devoted the latter part of his life entirely

to the spreading of the great message. He was chosen as the highest representative and apostle for the message which the Master Sri Ramakrishna came to give to the world, and many of you know how he delivered the message in trumpet-like tones in 1893 in Chicago, at the gathering of the representatives of the World's religions. The world had to listen to his message given in this assembly. There were exponents of all religions ; each to show the importance of his own particular faith, to proclaim that his was the only true faith ; but here was a man with an altogether different message. His message was universal and of a religion so far-reaching and all-inclusive and which covered such a vast ground, that the assembly listened with bated breath, and the world was thrilled with that message of harmony. In this world of narrow bigotry the time has come when we must rise above sectarian bigotry.

There are two ways of accepting this message. First : we see that all religions founded by God-men of great realization are but different paths that lead to the same goal. As it is said in the Gita : " In whatever manner ye worship, that path leads unto Me. " And as a great devotee sang : " There are so many rivers that empty their water into the sea. All the paths that men follow, crooked or straight, finally lead unto Thee. " That is the idea—to know that there is but one centre in the circle, although there may be so many radii converging to that one centre, the one goal of life—union with the Divine Spirit. From this standpoint Jesus said, " I and my Father are one. " Different religions are so many radii converging to the great Central Truth. There may be one peak, but there are many trails leading to that height ; one lake, but so many different places from which you reach the same lake. All the different ways we follow will end at the same place. Therefore, why should we attempt to judge others and to say what is and what is not good for them ? We are all of the one Spirit, but different individuals need different paths : this being so we should give our neighbours and friends liberty to follow their own paths, knowing that we are all brothers and sisters wending our way to the same destination.

True religion is not a state of mind ; it is the hankering of the soul to realize that Being whom we name and worship in different ways. Realize the harmony of religions in that

way. Another way of giving out the universal ideal to the world is to see that it must cover vast grounds. Christians may say that Christianity is the universal religion; Mohammedans claim that theirs is the universal religion; and there are different sects and other religions which say their special teaching is universal and should be followed by all and be a guide to the whole world. But how can that be? Human nature is so unlike. We are placed in diverse stages of evolution and different natures need different ideals. What is your need may not be mine; what is good food for you may not be acceptable for me; convalescents may need dieting; you in your good health may need more wholesome food; again, people need different sorts of dresses. So in our life we need different religions. Some may understand the Christ ideal, and to them the Christ ideal appeals; while others look to Buddha, Mohammed or different ideals. Now would you join with bigotry and fanaticism and say that if you have not followed my faith, you have to go without religion? The true universal religion should include all the ideals suited to different natures, yet have room enough for all. It should satisfy varied types. It should be as broad as the heavens above and deep as the ocean beneath.

Swami Vivekananda's one great ideal in life was the spiritualization of the human race; he laboured to raise the ideals of life. Whatever you are, you have to recognise that you are not a mere machine; know you are Spirit and part of the Divine Spirit and thus work in the different fields of activity. Perform your duties and govern your motives with that basic and fundamental idea that you are Spirit and a child of God. If this were carried out, this world would be changed and made happier from day to day. You are the stainless Spirit, and even if environments seem overwhelming, realizing this you would be able to throw off most of the unfortunate influences of environments and circumstances. That is spiritualizing the Ideal. His conception of the broad scope of universal religion was shown by his great love, his universal sympathy. He would not exclude any one; he wanted to give opportunity to all. He would declare that life is a vast institution, a sort of gymnasium in which we are all taking exercises and after finishing these exercises we become gods. His heart was filled with love for all humanity. To quote his own words: "At twenty years of age I was

the most unsympathetic, uncompromising fanatic ; I would not walk on the footpath, on the theatre-side of the streets in Calcutta. At thirty-three, I can live in the same house with prostitutes and never would think of saying a word of reproach to them. Is it degenerate ? Or is it that I am broadening out into the Universal Love which is the Lord Himself ? ”

This attitude is the same as that shown by Christ when he spoke to Mary Magdalene, and like that of Buddha, the Lord of Compassion, when he accepted the invitation to dine with a courtesan, rejecting that of a nobleman. In the proportion that we can show that real love and sympathy in our heart, to that extent we have attained to higher unfoldment ; and if we can put into practice even a very small part of his breadth of vision and his love, in giving opportunity to all, we shall be blessed.

SWAMI PRAKASHANANDA

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## GLEANINGS AND COMMENTS

### *Benares—An Interpretation*

LILY

**N**EW faiths may come into being ; new schisms may develop and gather followings ; fundamentalists may wage war against the growing army of modernists ; old dogmas may tatter to a final stand on the battle-ground of Higher Criticism ; but Benares still is, as it has been for countless centuries, the Holy City and Mecca of the devout Hindu.

Its crumbling temples may sink into the Ganges ; but other temples will rise in that many-templed and many-Godded city by the river.

Hereditary customs have become a fetish after unknown generations of repetition. The old order changeth not, and Mother Gunga, flowing on to the sea, carries within her inscrutable bosom the secret knowledge of untold tragedies, untold life-histories of devotees and fanatics ; untold stories of sacrifices and offerings that have taken place upon her venerable and venerated banks.

She is the essence of sacredness and symbolism ; her waters, however muddy in reality, metaphorically purify both the living and the dead. She has seen the ancient city rise from its infancy, tier on tier, to the jumbled mass above her ; where the children of an antique faith cling tenaciously to an outworn, yet ever vital belief in the tenets of Hinduism. The old dogmas of that ancient worship have survived the eternal conflict of questing souls.

The intricate and involved creed of orthodox Hinduism has been fostered by a mighty Priesthood ; disseminated by a great Brotherhood of Swamis, Gurus and Pandits ; nourished by an endless procession, fanatically devout, of Sannyasis, Yogis, Sadhus and Fakirs. A voluntary army of " Holymen " have carried the banner of the Faith triumphantly through a succession of spiritual wars, and the mystical slogan of that banner is the " Om " that vibrates harmoniously in the heart of the chanter of the sacred Mantras.

The Philosophy of Vedantism has remained as impregnable and remote as a star, above the murky mass of superstitions, perversions and ignorance, wherein the more primitive and uncultured minds of the less spiritually awakened Hindu have wandered in a sea of sensual imaginations.....

The lives of the orthodox Hindus are bound up in the elaborate rituals of the Faith, intricate in conception and incapable of explanation. They delight in the offices of Religion, and find their greatest interest centered in an earnest observance of holy days and pujas. Festivals, feasts, prayers, sacrifices, ceremonies and pujas, are all offered to the Hindu, and fill an otherwise drab and uneventful life.

Pilgrimages hold out the charm of adventure and the call of a spiritual "wander-lust" is answered. An inward urge drives the pious to visit places of sanctity, endowing them with sanctity in the effort, and lending them a glamour of the attained. The contact with the centres of things religious is a spiritual stimulus and the effect of such a pilgrimage is far-reaching and influential.

The Hindu Calendar is filled with periodical Festivals, intervals replete with interest and opportunities for definite plans of pleasure and excitement. There are about thirty-six distinct religious festivals in every Hindu year, which alone preclude any possibility of boredom.

These religious feasts and fairs have all the earmarks of usual holiday occasions, filled as they are with music, singing, dancing, feasting, processions and ceremonials dear to the heart of the Oriental.

Relief from the tedium of the daily round is offered in the many forms of religious rites and customs, whose origins are so remote as to be lost in the dim past of buried centuries. The Feast of Lights, the Durga and Kali Pujas, the Holy Festival and many others are filled to the brim with colour and charm whose hold is around the hearts of these "Children of the Soil and Sun."

Should the Westerner be so unwise as to select April, or any hot weather month for the occasion of his first visit to Benares, I fear he will miss all the magic and glamour that gives its peculiar charm to this old City by the River. His eyes will be filled with burning glare of the unwinking sun, and the intolerable reflections from the glassy surface of the Ganges; his ears will be filled with the barbarous clamour of outlandish noise; the beat of the drum in endless reiteration will but serve to accentuate the pulse of unrelieved heat; his nostrils will be filled with the acrid scent of the smoke from the burning ghats on the river's edge, and he will be repelled by the composite smell of the East, undefinable, but powerful and insidious.

He will doubtless feel revulsion from the accumulation of unaccustomed sensations. In all the pushing, clamouring, odorous throng he will feel repelled and disgusted. In contemplating the heaps of refuse that lie melodiously at the doors of the temples, he will lose sight of the beauties of the splendid carvings, the delicate traceries, the harmonious colours, the subdued decorations, the gracious arches and pillars of the old Indian architecture about him,

Amid the thousands of images of alien Gods, he will feel himself an alien in heathen land ; a superior being far above all the childish absurdities, the fetishes and ceremonials that he so little understands. He will doubtless not comprehend beneath all the turmoil, and seemingly senseless charlatanism of priest and devotee, the All-pervading Beauty of the original concept of One-ness and the fact of the supreme belief in the attributes of the Omniscient One God.

In the tawdriness of the non-essentials built up by puny man, he will forget the great undying Truths behind all the obscuring activities of the human creatures.

In reality the Gods and Goddesses are but man's attempt at a concrete expression of divinities ; merely an endeavour to personify and bring into form some ideas of the dimly-sensed and incomprehensible forces of life and nature. Man's immemorial effort to bring orderly concepts out of the void have always resulted in failure ; for the finite cannot express the infinite satisfactorily. But, " Man depicts himself in his Gods " ; he longs for some definite material substance to pin his bewildered conjectures to. The little gods and godlings are the talisman that helps to satisfy the craving for a concrete extension of the senses.

As to the exigencies of life and death, the Hindu has acquired a fatalistic attitude. It is his best protection from fear. He believes in a continuation of life after death ; in lives beyond lives ; he is stoical and calm, even indifferent to death itself.

Life, at best, among India's seething multitudes, is beset with danger ; disease and famine lurk around the corner ; and Death, the inevitable and inexorable Reaper, gathers his harvest impartially from young and old, fat and lean. Why then, in the uncertain life of man, deny him his pleasures in festivals, his comforts in pujas, his interest in pilgrimages, his satisfaction in sacrifices and offerings ? Such vital intervals in his life are the compensation for prolonged discomforts and meagreness of existence. What matter whether the shrine be that of Brahma, Shiva, Vishnu, or some other " strange God " ?

Natural phenomena and the forces of nature are personified but to accentuate the great enduring Truths of Life. Vice is punished, virtue is rewarded ; merit is gained by acts of charity, by meditation and sacrifice. It is but another form of the old scheme of spiritual endeavour, devised by wisdom in this life of complexities and unrest.

Inward exaltation is the reward of the devout, and the pilgrim has reached the pinnacle of desire when he stands on the old steps leading down to the sacred river, and laves his body in the literal water with the thought of spiritual purification. He is purified by the belief

in the act of purification. When he washes his body in the Ganges, he is clean. His humble offering of rice, honey, sweetmeats and flowers are acceptable to the Gods. The value of the offering is gauged by the sincerity of the spirit of the offerer. He is conscious of spiritual uplift and regeneration ; he is dressed in new garments of faith and his spiritual lamp is relighted with the ever-living life of exaltation. His susceptible and emotional nature responds to the contagion of the influences of the thousands of pilgrims around him, bent with one accord, on a similar mission. He is exhilarated and refreshed in his thought that he is an added unit to the common brotherhood. He has attained the desired end ;—why quibble about the means ? Surely there is sufficient virtue in such earnest endeavour ? His way, too, leads upward, if by a different road. If the path is not our path, shall the end of the road not converge in one ultimate unity of ways ? Are his thoughts not our thoughts, clothed in different language ?

Benares stands for the acme of attainment to the Hindu. Among her congested and labyrinthine streets and lanes the visitor may find many beautiful temples, rising, many pillared and towered, to the sky, as a concrete expression of man's devoutness and faith. So great is the belief in the virtue of the old city, that thousands of pilgrims come there to die, secure in the belief that to rest at last in the sacred waters of the Ganges is in itself sufficient to gain an immediate entrance into Heaven. The ancient steps leading down to the water have been worn smooth by the innumerable feet of pilgrims and worshippers.

Rising above the banks of the Ganges are an infinite number of temples ; a multitude of shrines, a horde of Brahmins and priests who carry on the involved offices of their religion ; a clamorous throng of mendicants and loathsomely diseased beggars solicit alms ; a crowd of busy vendors ply their trades ; and life, frank and unashamed ; vivid and colourful ; blatant and dominant ; moves on under the Tropic sun. And in antepthonal contrast, winds the eternal funeral procession, on its way to the Burning Ghats by the river. Life and Death—the eternal pattern of light and shade, the endless give and take of Destiny. “The moving finger writes, and having writ, moves on.” The smoke from the Burning Ghats mingles with the smoke of the cooking fires ; the living feed life as the dead feed the flames. The panorama is changeless yet ever changing ; each act of the Drama is endlessly repeated. The Play remains the same ; only the players come and go in the perpetual motion of kaleidoscopic evolution.

Each year a million pilgrims find their way to Benares, and pay their vows ; walking the thirty-six miles around the city on the old road of Asi and Barna Ghats, where the dust of countless footsteps has risen and settled, and the old trees lend their grateful shape to the weary

wanderers. At intervals along the way, little temples and shrines punctuate the stations of the pilgrimage and at intermittent villages the wayfarer rests and is refreshed in body.

Benares flourished six centuries before Christ, and although predatory invaders have repeatedly sacked the city and destroyed her temples, she has risen from the ashes of vandalism, like the Phoenix of old, to flourish in newer and better strongholds of religion, fortified and kept up by an impregnable belief.

From the looms of Benares have come for centuries the finest silks, woven skilfully into intricate pattern and exquisite harmonies of colour and texture, and have gone abroad to deck the bodies and enhance the beauties of thousands of alien queens and maidens. From the little primitive bazaars nestling in the shadows of the Golden Temple, have gone out beautifully wrought brasses, carved and chased with old world designs and destined to rest at last in the homes of a foreign people far across the sea. Endless replicas of deities in miniature have found their way into all parts of the globe, to strike an anachronistic note in some occidental harmony of decoration, or to carry a touch of mystery and romance into some commonplace modern drawing-room.

The shuttles move to and fro on the material looms of Benares and in some inscrutable rhythm of its own, the Loom of Life weaves on and on ; new patterns from old ; old patterns from new ; now drab, now gay. In the fluid spiral of Destiny's Plan, the cycle of life turns round and round, the beginning and ending unknown to man.

In the moving pageantry of the brief but colorful sunset, we say farewell to the old River and the sacred City on its banks. As we row along the resplendent waters, reflecting the gold and saffron, the violet and bird's-egg-blue of the tropical sky, we take a last look at the irregular skyline of Benares, where the dome of the Golden Temple catches fire from the fading light, and the age-worn city takes on softer hues in the misty smoke-filled air. The scent of sandalwood and spices is wafted to us on the little breeze ; the throb of temple-drum beats from the distance ; a temple bell rings out in crystalline clearness ; the definite forms of the worshippers become blurred into an indefinite mass of pastel shades, and by our side on the still waters of the Ganges, floats a jasmine chain from some flowered bier. The perspective of Benares fades away into an impression as the shadows of the Indian night fall like a curtain, swiftly blotting out a scene. Benares is already a memory ; but here and there along the shore flare the fires from the Burning Ghats ; like lonely signals of Fate, unceasing and persistent, melancholy reminders of the end of all the Pilgrimages. Death gives the final "Salaam," Life, only, is Illusion.

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## VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN OUR EDUCATIONAL CURRICULUM

N. SUBRAMANIAN, B. A., L. T.

**V**ARIOUS attempts are now being made to reorganise our school education and the introduction of handwork as an important element in the training of youth is one that has come in the wake. The old school seems to have been responsible for spreading the notion that the head meant everything and the hands little and that only labour with the mind was honourable while to toil with the hands was unworthy and even disgraceful. But the worth of work with the hands as an uplifting power is slowly coming to be understood.

Our education is mainly defective in three ways and a proper recognition of the place of handwork will go a great way to remedy the shortcomings.

First, our school is still obsessed by the doctrine of formal training. It is believed, that a study of the subjects taught at school is a *panacea* for all ills and is a fitting preparation for any walk in life. The pupil is enabled to read and understand mysterious writings and to work out long and difficult problems in mathematics, but at the same time it is clear to any one that so far as real life values are concerned, these abilities have very little direct influence, for there is a great difference between studying about things and studying the things themselves, between book instruction and illumination of practical experience. The more abstract the study, the further is the pupil removed from life. It is a sad sight to see those who are called bachelors of arts and masters of elegant accomplishments, living lives without beauty, system or pleasure. To remedy this state of affairs it becomes necessary to so construct the curriculum that it is based upon ideals and activities closely allied to life and worked out in situations as close to the actual as possible. The aim is "not so much to make them know what they did not know but to make them behave as they did not behave." "Education is not so much a preparation for life but life itself."

The second defect in our education is that while professing a knowledge aim, it defeats its own purpose by allowing a rigid system of examinations, time-tables and syllabuses to suck out all life and individuality and thus making the school atmosphere "alien to an intelligent sympathy for childhood." The very desk carefully and scientifically designed and adjusted to keep the pupils fixed in immobility is a sign of bondage. This spirit extends into the region of morals and the system of rewards and punishments forms the "bench of the soul" as Madame Montessori calls it. "Any one who would say that freedom inspires our pedagogy," she says, "is like a child who, sitting before a

\* From a paper before the Teachers' College Teachers' Association, Saidapet. 1

box of mounted butterflies should exclaim that they had life and could fly." The new spirit of reform aims to take the school nearer to the home and make the children feel that "the school is not completed but waits for its completion through their co-operation—in short, to make them feel that it is not their cage but their nest." The Dalton plan, the project method and such other attempts seek to attain to this ideal through "the whole-hearted purposeful activity" of children. It is not what is taught that matters but what is caught.

The third defect in our education is what makes one exclaim in the end, "I asked for bread and they gave me stone." Those to-day who seek education or impart it with a cultural aim are few; the majority seek it first and foremost in order that they may be enabled to earn a livelihood, in some vague belief that long years of poring over books and success in public examinations would bring at least a clerkship as a reward. But in the end the disillusionment comes when the doors of life appear closed against them and unemployment stares them in the face. Would it not have been just and wise to have determined at the outset what they wanted and then to have helped them to achieve their object, instead of leading them to nowhere? This sort of an aimless education not only does not keep one to earn a livelihood but also fails to impart that culture which is its object and which should work for social amelioration.

In this connection the following extract from Macaulay's Minutes on Education, though referring to another time and to another situation, is very interesting:

"I have been used to see petitions to Government (from several ex-students) for compensation. All these petitions, even the most unreasonable of them, proceeded on the supposition that some loss had been sustained—that some wrong had been inflicted. These are surely the first petitioners who ever demanded compensation for having been educated gratis—for having been supported by the public during twelve years, and then sent forth into the world well furnished with literature and science. They represent their education as an injury which gives them a claim on the Government for redress, as an injury for which the stipends paid to them during the period of *infliction* were a very inadequate compensation. *And I doubt not that they are in the right. They have wasted the best years of their life in learning what procures for them neither bread nor respect.* Surely we might, with advantage, have saved the cost of making these persons useless and miserable; surely men may be brought up to be burdens to the public and objects of contempt to their neighbours at a somewhat smaller charge to the State. But such is our policy. We do not even stand neuter in the contest between truth and falsehood. We are not content to leave the natives to the influences of their own hereditary prejudices. To the natural difficulties which obstruct the progress of sound science in the East, we add fresh difficulties of our own making. Bounties and premiums such as ought not to be given even for the propagation of truth, we lavish on false taste and false philosophy.....

"It goes to form a nest, not merely of hopeless place-hunters, but of bigots prompted alike by passion and by interest to raise a cry against every useful scheme of education. If there should be any opposition among the natives to the change which I recommend, the opposition will be the effect of our own

system. It will be headed by persons supported by our stipends and trained in our colleges. The longer we persevere in our present course, the more formidable will that opposition be.....

"I conceive that we have at present no right to the respectable name of a Board of Public Instruction. We are a Board for wasting public money, for printing books which are of less value than the paper on which they are printed was while it was blank ; for giving artificial encouragement to absurd history, absurd metaphysics, absurd physics, absurd theology ; for raising up a breed of scholars who find their scholarship an encumbrance and a blemish, who *live on the public while they are receiving their education and whose education is so utterly useless to them that when they have received it they must either starve or live on the public all the rest of their lives.*"

Macaulay proposed "to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern ; a class of persons, Indians in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals and in intellect." This has been achieved but with what effect ?

A starving and famine-stricken people want bread before culture, want a livelihood before they can revel in Shakespeare and Milton. Our education does not pretend to fulfil this want. So under present conditions it is but fit that we seek to remodel it.

The first move in the direction of Vocational Education in India was made by the Calcutta University when it established the study of economics from the specially Indian point of view and appointed a lecturer on the 'Poverty Problem.' The studies revealed a hopeful plan of progress which resulted in the starting of the Polytechnic Institute and the formation of the Educational Colony of the Calcutta University in 1923, at the suggestion of Captain Petavel, who has been working at the problem since he came to India in 1913. The scheme also received the strong support of the Calcutta University Commission who have devoted several pages in their report to the plan in its educational aspect.

In the prospectus of the Educational Colony issued in 1923, we are given the following outline : "What then we ought to do now is to establish schools outside the towns providing for schooling and practical training, in which agriculture would play a great part. With present food prices it would pay to do this, because what would be earned would more than counterbalance the expense. This plan might be carried out gradually, taking school boys in rotation a certain number of times weekly. Besides, in these country schools, many middle class young men who are unemployed can become agricultural and industrial apprentices. Their education would be continued in the colony by lectures and study. These residential education colonies as we might call them could hardly fail to arouse keen interest as a modern revival of the old Gurukula and as paving the way to garden cities and garden suburbs.

In big towns and cities, Captain Petavel also proposes a strong co-operative organisation of schools with a view to impart vocational training to school boys. He says that the first requirement is to develop and extend the idea of *earning whilst learning*, as is the practice in many American schools.

It is nearly three years since the Government of Madras took up the scheme for vocational training in schools in earnest and as yet very few High Schools in the Presidency have been able to give effect to it. A brief account of the work done in this direction in the Ramakrishna Mission Residential High School, Mylapore is given below, as suggestive of the mode of its introduction.

The Home was originally started to relieve the distress of poor and intelligent youths prosecuting their studies in Madras. Those who failed to show satisfactory progress in the ordinary course of studies, were as a rule sent out. But it was always found that where intellectual ability was lacking in the routine work of the school room, there was manual dexterity to counterbalance the defect. To give a chance to the latter capacity to develop, it became necessary to provide facilities for handwork.

After a short experiment during the summer holidays in 1922 with carpentry and rattan work (the results of which were encouraging), the aid of the Government was sought for the erection of a workshop and its equipment. The workshop was designed to engage about fifty boys at a time altogether in carpentry, rattan work, spinning and weaving ; the estimates went up to Rs. 10,000 for building, Rs. 2,500 for initial equipment, and Rs. 3,000 for annual recurring charges. The Government were pleased to sanction a full grant and the workshop building was completed in a few months.

The scheme has been in operation for the last two years and it must be pronounced a success. Sir Charles Todhunter who visited the workshop remarked, "I am quite a convert to the grant for vocational training about which, I must confess, I was sceptical until I saw your Home." The Hon'ble Sir A. P. Patro said, "The establishment of vocational instruction as part of general education is an admirable feature of the Home. I observed types of work executed by the students and there is no doubt that the skill and the bias which the students obtain here, if developed further, will enable them to make a living without any great difficulty."

One thing essential to bear in mind is that it is only by making the training pay, that really satisfactory work can be had. In these things monetary valuation is the only and perhaps the surest test of progress. The fair thing therefore is to arrange some scheme by which the student would receive compensation for all the work of value he did.

In our school there is a Scholar's Benefit Fund to which is credited the wages earned by the boys ; they are helped with books, cloths, etc., from this fund as contingencies arise.

The articles made are mostly sold away at our own premises. If a large number of them get stocked, the boys go out on holidays taking the articles and find a sale in the city. They also canvass orders during these sales for many household articles. The dignity of labour is impressed on the mind in a way that it can never be effaced.

Let us now turn our attention to a consideration of how this scheme is fitted into the existing curriculum of the secondary school.

The subjects taught here at present are carpentry, rattan work, spinning and weaving, knitting and tailoring and gold and silver smithy. The courses deal both with theory and practice. Practical work includes the making of household furniture and school furniture in carpentry, dhoties, towels, shirting, coating, blankets and woollen carpets in weaving, banians and stockings in knitting, and trays, flower-baskets, boxes, chairs, mats, etc. in rattan work.

In each department there are always some orders on hand so that there is a purposeful activity and an earnestness to give satisfaction. Waste cannot be wholly avoided but is kept at a minimum.

With regard to the time-table, it is so arranged that it repeats itself once every three working days irrespective of the holidays that intervene. One-sixth of the schooling time or a half day once in three days is given to manual work in connection with one of the subjects mentioned.

There are also about a dozen boys who take primarily to vocational training and study in class-rooms outside the hours of manual work. They are given instruction in languages, drawing, commercial practice and book-keeping.

In order to facilitate the working of the scheme still further, a few workmen were engaged separately whom the boys might watch at work and learn while they made articles to order. A few boys of the working class are also admitted as day pupils.

From what has been said, it is evident that classes will have to be handy so that individual attention may be possible ; secondly, materials ought not to be wasted but use must be found for even small bits usually thrown away as useless ; thirdly, a variety of subjects should be introduced to cater to the different tastes of different pupils and to avoid overcrowding in one department or under one instructor ; fourthly, the articles made by the boys must be saleable and be sold in the market—many would be willing to buy their requirements through such an agency and also the requisites of the school such as tables, benches, chairs, desks, black-boards, map-stands and laboratory appliances may be made in the workshop with advantage.

It would further be necessary also to reconstruct the curriculum of ordinary studies, accepting usefulness as our aim rather than comprehensive knowledge. Time may be found for vocational training by cutting out most of what is not of practical use in life.

As at present, in a school of six to seven hundred boys, there must be at least five departments of vocational training, each providing accommodation for about fifteen boys to work at a time. Given a workshop, the average initial equipment will be approximately three to four thousand rupees and the recurring charges will be mainly the salaries of the instructors, about two hundred rupees per month.

In relation to the S. S. L. C. Scheme, it would be an advantage to get Vocational Training (as a special course) included in the C' group. It will be readily conceded that at least to those who are either unfi or have no inclination to pursue a University course vocational training would be more beneficial than a study of the History of England or a smattering knowledge of Algebra and Geometry.

As a necessary part of general education for all, manual training should find a place in the B group, where it is considered as educational handwork without any vocational aim. Time for this can be found by proper correlation of the studies included in the group.

This advocacy does not imply that all pupils who receive a High School education will take to handwork to eke out a livelihood later on ; but it does imply that all of them in whatever vocation or profession they may find themselves later on, will be much more interested in the productive occupations of the community in which they live and in the economic prosperity of the country. As Mahatma Gandhi says, one who spins a little yarn to produce at least a single cloth has done more to promote indigenous industry and self-reliance than hundreds who talk all day of doing good.

Before concluding, we have to consider some of the objections levelled against the inclusion of vocational training in the High School course. They are, (1) that industrial development should precede vocational training and as conditions obtain, there is no need for any special training ; (2) that it is an educational farce advocated only by faddists and will prove futile ; (3) that it is positively injurious and will stunt the intellectual growth.

Firstly, the pseudo-economist says that vocational training should be decided by the law of supply and demand. Where there is no demand, there is no need for any supply. But this is only partially true. We are seeing everyday that the world goes the other way and that as soon as there is a supply there is a demand, provided the supply gives you satisfaction. The myriads of those who carry on productive and inventive trade do not stop to ask "Is there a demand ?", but they perfect the article and create the demand ; immediately the stock is exhausted and there is a call for more. That is the way to drive out the devil of unemployment. It is essential that men should be trained to some kind of productive work instead of being exhorted to be parasites on society living on the work of others.

Secondly, that the scheme is an educational farce, is taken for granted by those people who are always prepared to condemn everything without a trial. There was some discussion in the Press sometime back over this point, quoting the opinion of the Carnegie Foundation that the system of American High Schools proved a farce and it cannot *therefore* be otherwise in India. Even granting it is a failure in America where they can afford to have special institutions for training tramcar drivers and plumbers, there is no reason why it should fail here where specialised training is rare as yet. Our duty should be to find out the causes of failure and guard against them and not to wholly abandon the scheme.

Thirdly, the view that vocational training will jeopardise intellectual growth requires a careful analysis. The objection, it appears to us, proceeds from what may be called the 'arithmetical fallacy' of judging intellectual growth on the assumption that the mind develops by adding to the store of information stuffed into it irrespective of its use of the ability to use. Only that knowledge is of most worth

which is useful and is used. The old school is largely responsible for the sterility of intellect in the educated classes of to-day and we shall be right in rebelling against the view that all that the youth of India needs as education is a stereo-typed mental training cast in a foreign mould and that all else would follow of itself.

The thoughtful and progressive men now recognise the fact that while there has always been a demand for professional men and women of the highest type of scholarship, at the same time many of these scholars should have had such education as would have brought them into direct contact with the development of the material resources of the country. India annually exports several millions of bales of cotton and millions of tons of food stuffs and fabulously large quantities of many kinds of raw materials. Here is the foundation for the up-building of a rich and powerful country, with great material resources and it seems inexcusable that industrial conditions should be as unsatisfactory as they are. Our country would have advanced far beyond its present condition, materially, if a large proportion of the brightest youths had been given skilled handicrafts (in place of quill-driving) and had been taught the mechanical arts and practical methods of agriculture ; and most important of all, agriculture should have been practically and scientifically developed. If such a foundation had been laid, India would now have possessed a more enlightened labouring class live under better conditions and the agricultural and other natural resources would have kept the country rich, prosperous and contented.

It is a deplorable fact that one of the richest countries in material resources in the world is compelled to import a large proportion of its clothing and other necessities of daily life which can be easily produced at our very doors, not to say anything of the luxuries. It is because a majority of educated persons seek unproductive employment. To-day the 'quill-driver' finds Government Offices are closed against him and the lawyer finds himself without clients and spends his time in idle political discussions and in poking his nose into every department of activity. It is high time for us to realise the mistakes that have been made, to realise that all forms of idleness are disgraceful and all forms of labour are honourable. With this realisation, discontent would become less and people would have industries to occupy their time, their thoughts and their energies.

A story related by Booker T. Washington, the Negro emancipator, in his book, 'Working with the Hands', gives a humorous but tragic touch to the present situation :—"The grave was dug in the midst of a pine forest, but the pine coffin that held the body was brought from Cincinnati. Hickory and other hard woods grew in abundance near by, but the wagon on which the coffin was drawn came from Missouri. Valuable minerals were close to the cemetery, but the shovels and picks used in digging the grave came from Pittsburg, and their handles from Baltimore. The shoes in which the dead man was buried came from Lynn, his coat and trousers from New York, his shirt from Lowell, and his collar and tie from Philadelphia. The only things supplied by

the country, with its wealth of natural resources, was the corpse and the hole in the ground. And he adds, "the country would have probably imported both of these if it could have done so."

The same author observes : "When any people, regardless of race or geographical position, have not been trained to habits of industry, have not been given skill of hand in youth, and taught to love labour, a direct result is the breeding of a worthless idle class, which spends a great deal of its time in trying to live by its wits. If a community is educated exclusively on books and is not trained to habits of applied industry, an unwholesome tendency to dodge honest productive labour slowly develops ; the people acquire a fondness for wasting valuable hours in discussion of idle politics ; they continually fret for fear that no means will be left to provide them with a living."

We sometimes grow impatient at this state of affairs and feel that we can get upon our feet by artificial and superficial efforts rather than by the slower but surer process which means one step at a time to become independent and strong. Let there be more light and less heat.

All that we ask is that the door which rewards industry, intelligence and character be left wide open for all.

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## NOTES OF THE MONTH

THE eighth session of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha had its sittings at Calcutta this year. Lala Lajpat Rai, one of the foremost leaders of the country, had also his presidential say on the many problems of the Hindu society crying for solution at present.

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It is an open fact, perhaps known to all our readers, that the origin of this all-India Hindu organisation has been in the growing consciousness of the Hindu community of the need of mobilisation of all its straggling forces for self-defence. This consciousness gained voice through the prominent leaders of the country like Madan Mohan Malaviya, and the organisation was set afoot some three years back. In recent years, unfortunately, communal disputes and exhibitions of religious fanaticism have been of frequent occurrence, and in most of these cases the Hindus were the greater sufferers. And it is but natural that prominent members of the community should think it right to organise themselves effectively for self-defence. The Hindu society, owing to its very ancient nature, presents an aspect of disintegration, and there are some factors that have contributed largely to this lack of cohesiveness in the society. So Lala Lajpat Rai, in his presidential address at the last Calcutta Session of the Hindu Mahasabha tried to point out all those factors of the Hindu communal life which he considers to be the chief causes of the modern emasculated condition of the community.

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It is needless to point out here that all these prominent leaders, including the Lalaji, who are at the back of this noble organisation are essentially political in their outlook ; and like true students of political economy they all are unanimous in saying that political subjugation of India is the principal cause of this national decadence, and so they are always keen upon mixing up the political issue with all other issues of the national life.

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Unfortunately, or fortunately, India occupies a unique place among all the different nations of the world. Her

nationalism is entirely different from what is noticed among other modern nations. We have told again and again in these pages that Indian nationalism is not of political kind, but it is essentially of the religious order. And this national consciousness or nationalism of hers is not the effect of one or two hundred years of the nation's life, but is the fruit of all her thinkings and strivings through untold ages of the past. It is her national *Samskara* deeply rooted to her soul, the removal of which would only mean her death. And for the very same reason she offers almost an insoluble enigma to the student of modern political economy. And that is the very reason again why even the Hindu leaders of this country not unoften fail to understand her when they borrow the lantern of the political sages of the West and try to discern her face in its light. Quite a different science and a different method of application are necessary to know her aright. And that science is the *Adhyatmic vidya* and that method is yoga or self-discipline. And again that is the very reason why we find in Ancient India no one could actually lead the nation nor could get any response to his call unless he himself was essentially a religious man in the strictest sense of the term. The same truth holds good even to-day. The heart of the nation can only respond to a Raja Ram Mohan Roy, to a Dayananda, to a Vivekananda, or to a Mahatma Gandhi.

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Among many other valuable utterances, Lala Lajpat Rai had a good fling at the Ideal of *Vairagya* and *Sannyasa*, specially the young Sannaysins. He opines that one of the main causes of the decadence of the present-day Hindus is the too strong tendency of other-worldliness or the spirit of *Vyragya* which necessarily makes the people pessimistic, cheerless, dreamy and impractical. In righteous indignation he condemns this practice by saying, "The Sastras have laid down that no one is allowed to become a Sannyasin or to undertake the duties of a preacher without having passed through the mill of Grihastha Ashrama. It is a matter of extreme pain to me that there should be a number of Hindu scholars and leaders in the country who are inculcating *Vyragya* and *Sannyas Dharma* to young men. In my judgment it is entirely opposed to the real spirit of Hindu culture that children and young men should be filled in with the teachings of *Vyragya*." He further exhorts his countrymen to become

ambitious and full of cheer by saying, "I want my people to be strong and healthy, full of ambition, with a will to win and with a desire to go forward in their march for progress."

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Amen ! But we fail to understand whence our Lalaji has derived the informations on which he bases his precious judgment that Vyragya is entirely opposed to the real spirit of Hindu culture. Poor Lalaji ! How miserably he has failed to understand the soul of Hindu culture in spite of his great intellect, sincerity and burning patriotism. His mind is obsessed with the method of estimating the values of life according to the Western standard, and that is why his diagnosis of the disease and prescription of the medicine are so entirely different from those of the true Hindu leaders, the saints and sages, of the country. We have been noticing that since his return from his sojourn in America, he has been persistently making the Sannyas institution the target of his criticism.

The nation that worships the ascetic of the ascetics, the great God Mahadev, the nation that has installed in the sacred shrine of her heart the Parashakti, Kali, who lives in Smashana, the burning ground where all animality of man, all his ambitions of life are burnt to ashes, the nation whose God-intoxicated Vedic sages have declared from the house-top

न कर्मणा न प्रजया धनेन  
त्यागेनैके अमृतत्त्वमानशु ॥

"Not by progeny, nor by Karma, nor by wealth, but by renunciation alone Immortality is obtained," the nation that is fed and nurtured with the lives and teachings of an unending brilliant galaxy of saints and sages, the nation which has formulated the scheme of social life in the form of *Varnashrama* which places the Paramahansa, the *Turiashrami*, as the coveted goal of human life and consequently 'sets a premium on the life of Vyragya or Sannyasa, the nation every page of whose literature redounds with the glory of the ideal of self-sacrifice and self-restraint, the nation which is willing to sacrifice everything for the conservation of spiritual values of life, to say that the spirit of Vyragya 'does not form an integral part of the culture of that nation' is to misread entirely her national history. The immortal Swami Vivekananda, the prophet of modern India, has told us with an inimitable emphasis that renunciation and service are the

soul of Hindu culture. And this assertion of Swamiji is amply borne out by the literature and tradition of the land, if only we read them with our own eyes and not through a borrowed lens.

Any one who has learnt to feel the pulse of the nation cannot fail to understand that religion and spirituality forms the vital core of her being. All other concerns of life derive their respective values from that one central value—the realisation of the Spiritual Reality of man, or God. Life is but a divine sport, a Leela of the Supreme Deity ; matter is but a shadow of the Spirit ; the world is, but a flash of the Supreme Soul ; as ciphers have no value of their own, but get values only when put behind the figure one, so matter and material life get their meaning only from the Spirit or Atman that resides in them. All the knowledge of the physical nature, all the prosperity of the mundane world, all the power of material life are perfectly valueless just like ciphers, without the knowledge and realisation of that central reality, the Soul of all souls, the Be-ing of all beings, the Atman or God. This quest of spiritual value in and through all phases and activities of human life is the corner stone of Hindu culture. And its realisation and practical application in the work-a-day life as exhibited in the lives of its great national heroes form the bed rock of its civilisation.

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'A tree is known by its fruits' ; so a nation is known by its heroes. The great heroes of Ancient India who made the epochs of her history were one and all, without exception, spiritual and God-intoxicated men. From this also we can clearly understand towards which direction the life-current of this ancient nation flows.

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Now, Sannyas or Vyragya is the natural outcome of this hankering of her soul for the spiritual realisation or conservation of her spiritual values. Bhagawan Sri Krishna says in the Anugita :

“ज्ञानं सन्यासलक्षणम्”

“The true knowledge is of the nature of Sannyasa,” i. e., no one can dream even to conserve his spiritual values or gain the knowledge of the Spiritual Reality of life without the renunciation of the worldly values. They are in the very nature of things opposed to each other. It is the same old

saying that 'Man cannot serve God and Mammon both.' Hence has arisen the spirit of Vyragya in this soil and influenced the working of the national mind to a very great extent, and it is for this very reason that we mark that India could produce such a brilliant galaxy of saints and sages the like of which we do not find anywhere else in the world. Even to-day when the whole world is drowned in materialism and sense enjoyment, when the intellectually glorified brute is rampant in the society, when man has almost forgotten that he has a soul, even now there are many blessed souls in India with whom religion is not a matter of mere faith, spirituality a make-belief and God a hear-say. But, on the contrary, religion forms a dynamic factor of their life, and they perpetually stand in the Presence of God.

Just as for a nation given to political or economical ideals of life, the supreme requisite is the protection of a military army or a civil force, so also for a people dedicated to the spiritual ideal of life, the supreme requirement is the protective and guiding influence of an army of religious men, consecrated by spiritual discipline and wholly dedicated to that one ideal of God-realisation or Self-realisation.

Sannyasins are thus the true national soldiers of India in whose keeping is the nation's sacred ideal of spirituality. If the fire of spirituality is to be kept ablaze in the heart of the nation, she must have the army of Sannyasins to trim it. Grihasthas may be good and ethical and their existence may be essential to fill the veins and arteries of the nation's body, but its heart of spirituality can only be vitalised by the all-exclusive, self-abnegating, stern discipline of the Sannyasin. That is how out of sheer national necessity has arisen the institutional Sannyas in this land. Not only in India but in other parts of the world as well, wherever human soul sincerely thirsted for God and the knowledge of the permanent reality of life, the development of monasticism and all-exclusive renunciation has been inevitable.

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In India the institution of Sannyas has been in existence since the days of the Vedas. But with the efflux of time when the spiritual ideal got stultified in the minds of the people, it was the Lord Buddha who first *organised* the institutional Sannyas in order to rehabilitate and foster the ancient spiritual ideal of Moksha or Nirvana. The impetus he gave

to this institution was so great that in less than three or four centuries almost half of India donned the ochre garb. Buddhist monks were the moving schools, moving libraries, moving hospitals and moving temples as well. It fell upon their shoulder as a sacred duty to minister to all the physical, mental, moral and spiritual needs of the people. And no wonder that within a short time they attracted all the devotion and reverence of the land to themselves. But with the deterioration of Buddhism, its monkhood also deteriorated. It is very difficult to determine just now whether the deterioration of Sangha caused the fall of Dharma or vice versa. But from a critical study of the history of the Buddhistic Age, it appears clearly that there operated a variety of causes to bring about the deterioration of both, and they in their deteriorated condition formed a vicious circle, each hastening the degeneration of the other.

The great Sankaracharya, the founder of modern Hinduism, recovered the soul of the Vedic Religion by discarding the deteriorated Buddhism from the land, but his genius was keen enough to understand the advantage of Sangha for the protection of his Vedic Dharma. So he gave a Vedic colouring to the Buddhistic Sangha institution and adopted it in full for his own purpose. That is how the institutional Sannyas came into vogue in India. We may mention here in passing that Roman Catholic monasticism is but a distant echo of the same Sangha of Buddhism. Since the days of Sankaracharya all the great national leaders of the country, including the most modern Swami Vivekananda only emphasised the need of institutional Sannyas and contributed much by their lives and doings to the augmentation of the institution.

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Sannyasa institution may have many defects, and we know no human institution which is perfect, but its efficacy in reference to the national efficiency of India, according to her own standard, is beyond all question. In the pre-historic days, it was the Sannyasins, the Aranyakas, that kept the fire of the Upanishadic knowledge ablaze in their forest huts and mountain caves, and were the custodians of the practical spirituality as well. In the Buddhistic period, it was the Buddhistic monks who re-vitalised the drooping soul of India and

carried the torch of culture and spirituality to the distant lands of semi-barbarous nations of Asia, Europe and Africa. And subsequently, it was the Sannyasins like Sankaracharya, Ramanujacharya, Madhwhacharya, Lord Gouranga, Tulsidas, Haridas, Ramananda, and a host of others who appeared from time to time and vitalised the spiritual soul of India and saved her from her national death during the dark days of Mohammedan supremacy. And again it is the same Sannyasins like Sri Ramakrishna and Vivekananda who have saved her from the social defeat and spiritual death which threatened her in the latter part of the last century with the advent of Western ideals of life into this land. The dark cloud has not yet been completely lifted from our heads, the utterances like those of the Lalaji show it. With such eminent record of national service at its back, Sannyasa institution can well justify its existence among the people. The national soldiers did their best services to the land in the past !

This from the utilitarian's standpoint. But the Sannyasa institution stands in its own splendour and glory like the noon-day sun and is not apologetic in the least for its existence in the Hindu society, or in any human society for the matter of that. If the spiritual soul or God is the ultimate reality of existence, then there must come one day to man the feeling of world-weariness, the Vairagya for all that is material, and a true hankering for Spiritual Light, just as an old man can never feel by the very fact of his growth the same pleasure in the dolls as a child does. So, we see, Vairagya or Sannyasa is the natural outcome of the growth of the human soul ; and the nation that shows more of this spiritual virtue, is more evolved in life.

Grihasta life may be very good and ethical, nay, essential for the development of some souls, but for higher spiritual realisation, it is a real impediment. It is a matter of actual fact known to all striving for spiritual realisation, that no one can even dream of higher spiritual meditation, Dhyana, leave alone Samadhi, unless his mind is trained to dispassion or Vairagya, and he practises absolute continence or Brahmacharya, and both these virtues are well-nigh impossible for a married man to practice, unless he be an uncommon spiritual giant. It is not unoften that we make mistakes in taking ethics and piety for spirituality, and the religion of faith for



the religion of experience, though the former is a stepping-stone to the latter. Spirituality means essentially the awakening of the spirit-consciousness or the mystic-consciousness, whose culmination is in the attainment of God-consciousness or cosmic-consciousness. Indeed very few can succeed in the full attainment of it, but the Hindu society of all human societies, has succeeded to a very large extent in making the environment of man the most conducive to that achievement. A Hindu may find it difficult in India to-day to earn his creature-comforts, but he will find it much easier to attain his soul than anywhere else. Even foreigners striving to lead a spiritual life find here the environment much more congenial to the spiritual growth than anywhere else in the world. And the Sannyasins of the land contribute to it not to a small extent. It is to them invariably one has to go for higher spiritual guidance.

Modern India stands in abject condition no doubt, politically defeated, economically starved ; but still she possesses her spiritual soul which can throw out, like sparks, spiritual giants like Bhagavan Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. But should she give up her spiritual life and spiritual institutions like Sannyasa, for her political and economical betterment ? Then, in the words of the Prophet of Modern India, " From the world all spirituality will be extinct ; all moral perfection will be extinct ; all sweet-souled sympathy for religion will be extinct ; and in its place will reign the duality of lust and luxury as the male and female deities, with money as its priest ; fraud, force and competition its ceremonies ; and the human soul its sacrifice. "

One word more and we have finished. Lala Lajpat Rai seems to contend that he has no serious objection to an old man taking to the life of Sannyasa, although he himself has not much partiality for the ideal, but it really pains him to see young men of the country adopting the life. But to us it is a sign of glory and hope for the country. In the first place, we must know who can do full justice to the life of Sannyasa, assuredly not the old man with his palsied limbs, tottering frame, hard encrusted worldly habits and one foot in the grave ! The *Atura Sannyasin* may be an object of pity or utmost an object of praise, but he can never be a teacher

of the society, simply for the reason that he has taken to the ideal late in life ; he can neither have the physical strength nor the mental vigour to bear the strain of the spiritual discipline which alone can produce spiritual realisations. We write this from our innumerable personal experiences. So the Sruti says that an aspirant must be आशिष्ठोददिष्टो मेधाविः । (buoyant with hope, firm in strength, keen in intellect) and not the old man sunk in decrepitude. As there is no merit in an old man of sixty practising Brahmacharya, so neither can he attain to any spiritual eminence by his hardened mind. Life is a struggle, so the keener the struggle, the greater the manifestation of energy and necessarily the greater is the result. So we reiterate that, if it is a fact that modern India could produce a generation of young men who are making a great bid for the spiritual ideal of Sannyas, we must take it as a matter of great pride and hope.

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What we really want to-day is an army, regularly an army of young Sannyasins, blooming in youth and vigour, with "muscles of iron and nerves of steel," with an undaunted heart and an adamant will, wholly dedicated to the ideal of self-abnegation and service, radiating gladness and joy begotten of self-repose and God-devotion, and reflecting on their face the purity of the Atman. It is such a band of young Sannyasins alone who can bear the standard of spirituality of India and march abroad for the world-conquest. The glory and salvation of our Motherland rest upon their shoulders. Swami Vivekananda has given his clarion call to young men of India to muster strong under his flag of renunciation and service, and modern India has responded to his call quite well. But we require many, many more, to make an effective army of Sannyasins not only to rejuvenate this ancient nation with the force of their souls and blood of their hearts, but to go abroad and spiritualise the brute which is inflicting so much misery upon her at home. That was the fond dream of Sri Swamiji,—to make a spiritual conquest of the world, to raise man the brute into man the divine. Now it has to be seen whether future India will hear Lajpat Rai or the Swamiji.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### SWAMI VIVEKANANDA : BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARY IN AMERICA

The Secretary sends us the following report of the anniversary day of Swamiji observed in San Francisco :

Swami Vivekananda's sixty-third anniversary was celebrated on January 18, at the Hindu Temple, in San Francisco, with usual devotion and two special services were conducted by our beloved and revered Swamis Prakashananda and Prabhavananda.

Swami Prakashananda spoke at the eleven o'clock service on "The Message of His Life." We were carried to spiritual heights while listening to the Swami speak in loving praise of his Master. Our hearts were flooded with peace and joy, as if, Swamiji was there as a living presence, so feelingly was the message delivered to the large and attentive audience. A report of his lecture is published elsewhere in this magazine.

The evening lecture was delivered by Swami Prabhavananda, subject being, "Swami Vivekananda's contribution to the Spiritual Thought of the World." Clear and uncompromising was the tribute he paid to this great Acharya, and with great force, he brought home to us all, the fact, that we have been blessed to have lived to receive Swamiji's wonderful message. Following is a synopsis of his lecture.

In speaking of Vivekananda, the Swami referred to an illustration in the Vedas of the *Homa* birds that lay their eggs in the sky. The egg begins to fall on the ground but before it actually touches the earth, the shell bursts, the tiny bird comes out and finding itself about to be dashed against the ground takes its flight and soars high in the sky. Such was in reality the soul of Vivekananda. Before the dust of earth could touch him, his soul took a flight high in the sky and rested on the lap of the Divine Mother. Ever afterwards he became the playground of the Divine Will.

The meeting of Vivekananda with his Master Ramakrishna has a great significance in the spiritual world. Sri Ramakrishna represented what was ancient—the ancient wisdom of the East and Vivekananda was modern, represented in him the modern culture. And their meeting signifies the confluence of the ancient with the modern, the meeting of the wisdom of the East with the learning of the West.

Vivekananda was born at a time when the whole world was rushing towards materialism, not excepting India. For, with the establishment of British rule in India, the West had not only conquered the body of India but wanted to conquer her soul. Of course as India had inherited the materialism of the West with the advent of the British, she also inherited a boat-load of Christian missionaries. But the people of India never took seriously these missionaries. They are always looked upon with pity. And India was imitating the West in her materialism. But this state of thing was not to be. India must live. For she has a distinct message of her own to give to the world. And the Divine Master had promised in that land of spirituality to come whenever necessary to uphold her Dharma. And he had come again. The spirit of Krishna, the spirit of Christ had descended again as Rama-

krishna. In this God-man Ramakrishna, Vivekananda found the key to life—found verified the truths taught in the Bibles of the world.

In speaking of Swami Vivekananda, the Swami referred to his Master, because the Swami thought that these two lives cannot be separated, they are mingled together and form one whole life. Master's life was the aphorism and Vivekananda's was the commentary to the aphorism.

Any other man with the power and talent of a Vivekananda would have formed a sect of his own like any other prophet of the past. But Vivekananda did not—because that would have been baffling the mission of his own life and that of his Master. These two great souls were born to show to the world the Ideal of a Universal Religion.

Vivekananda did not preach anything new which was not contained in the Bibles of the world. Religion is not invented but discovered, revealed. And he revealed the same truths once more, the truths taught in the Bibles of the world. The modern world finds the proof of religion, finds the truth of the teachings of the great prophets and Saviours in the life of Vivekananda.

Yet to say that Vivekananda did not contribute anything new to the spiritual thoughts of the world would not be quite correct. For it was Vivekananda first who while teaching Advaita—oneness, the highest goal—showed the way of reconciliation between Dvaita, Visishtadvaita and Advaita. While speaking to a large gathering he was accosted by an enquirer, "Why Swami, this is something new that has not been preached by Sankara, Ramanuja or Madhwa, where do you get that idea?" And Vivekananda replied "Because it was left for me to preach that."

Yes, it was left for him to preach that and thus he also proved that *one* and the *many* are the same realities viewed from different stand-points. Thus he showed that not only the different modes of worship alone, but the different modes of work, different modes of struggle—all are paths of realization. No longer any distinction between sacred and secular. The whole life is spiritualized. Not only are the temples and churches the places of Divine communion, but the home, the kitchen, the farmyard, the laboratory of the scientist—everywhere is the place to commune with the Divine.

Thus the West saw in Vivekananda a new type of man, a new type of preacher and India saw in him a new type of Sannyasin, the "like of which" as his Master said "this planet of ours had never seen."

#### DONATIONS

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# THE VEDANTA KESARI

“ Let the lion of Vedanta roar. ”

“ Let me tell you, strength, strength is what we want  
And the first step in getting strength is to uphold  
The Upanishads and believe that ‘ I am the Atman. ’ ”

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

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## GOSPEL OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

### I

[WHO IS THE BEST DEVOTEE ?]

**W**HEN M. arrived with Dr. Sarkar at the house at Shyampukur which had been hired for Sri Ramakrishna's treatment, they found the Master seated in his upstairs apartment with a smile on his face, surrounded by devotees. Dr. Bhaduri also was sitting before him.

Dr. Sarkar felt the pulse of Sri Ramakrishna and enquired carefully about his illness. And by and by the conversation turned to matters spiritual.

*Bhaduri (to Dr. Sarkar) :* The fact is, everything is dream-like.

*Sarkar :* Everything a delusion ? Whose then is this delusion and why ? And why do people talk, knowing it all to be a delusion ? I cannot believe that God is real and the creation is unreal.

*Sri R. :* This is a good attitude of yours :—‘ O God, Thou art my Lord, I am Thy servant. ’ So long as you feel your body to be real, and feel the distinction of ‘ I ’ and ‘ thou, ’ so long this relation of a servant towards God is really good ; then it is not good to think, ‘ I am That. ’

Further, it is the same thing whether I see a room from a corner of it or from its centre.

*Bhaduri (to Dr. Sarcar) :* Whatever I have said can be found in the Vedanta. But how can you know, unless you study the scriptures ?

*Sarcar :* Why, did he (Sri Ramakrishna) become so wise by studying the scriptures ? He also says the same thing as you do. Won't it do without reading the Shastras ?

*Sri R. :* But do you know how often I had heard about these things ?

*Sarcar :* No, mere hearing is liable to many errors. You have not merely *heard*.

The conversation then took a different turn. Sri Ramakrishna said to Dr. Sarcar, "Is it true that you said that I am mad ? They (*pointing to M. and some other devotees*) are reluctant to go to you for that."

*Sarcar :* When did I ? But I said that you are egoistic. Why do you allow people to take the dust of your feet ?

*M. :* If he did not, people would cry.

*Sarcar :* They should be pointed out their mistake.

*M. :* Why, does not God dwell in all beings ?

*Sarcar :* I do not object to that. And in that case you should behave in the same way with all.

*M. :* But in some men the Divine is manifest in a greater degree. Water exists everywhere, but is manifest in ponds, rivers and seas. Do you have the same respect for a raw Bachelor of Science as for Faraday ?

*Sarcar :* I accept all this. But why do you call him (Sri Ramakrishna) God ?

*M. :* Why do we salute each other ? Because God abides in every heart. You have neither experienced nor thought much about these things.

*Sri R. (to Dr. Sarcar) :* God is more manifest in certain beings than in others. I have told you how the rays of the sun reflect one way on earth and trees, and another way on a mirror. They reflect brilliantly on the latter. Take the case of Prahlada. Do you think he and these (the disciples) are equal? His whole heart and soul was lost in the Lord!

Dr. Sarcar did not reply to this. Sri Ramakrishna said to him after a while, "Well, you feel attracted to this (*i. e.*, Sri Ramakrishna). You told me that you love me."

Dr. Sircar replied : "You are a child of nature, therefore I said so much. They salute you by touching your feet—the sight of it pains me; and I think they are spoiling a really good soul. The disciples of Kesav Sen did the same thing with him. Just listen to me—"

*Sri R. :* Listen to you?—You who are greedy, sensual and egoistic!

*Bhaduri :* That is to say, you are a *Jiva*. It is the nature of a *Jiva* to have greed for money, name and fame, to be lustful and proud. All *Jivas* have this nature.

*Sarcar :* All right, if you so want, I shall only test the affections of your throat and go away without meddling in other affairs. If I am to argue, I must speak the truth.

After this, the assembly remained silent for a time. Sri Ramakrishna broke the silence by remarking to Bhaduri, "Do you know, he (Sarcar) is now trying to find the truth by a process of negation. God is neither the *Jivas*, nor the *Jagat*, He is transcendental,—this is how he is reasoning. But after reaching the Truth, when he will come down, he will accept everything as divine.....Man at last finds that God Himself has become the twenty-four principles\*, even He has become

\*The twenty-four categories under which the whole universe is divided.

men. (*To Dr. Sarcar*) There are three kinds of devotees, the lowest, the middle, and the best. The lowest kind say, 'Yonder is God !' They say that the creation is separate from the Creator. The middle class hold that God is *Antaryamin* (The Inner Regulator), living within the heart, and they see Him there. The best kind find that He has become all this, it is He who has become the twenty-four principles, and they find Him filling the whole universe. . . . . Study the Gita, the Bhagavatam, the Vedanta and other scriptures, then you will understand all these. . . Is not God immanent in the universe ?"

*Sarcar* : Yes, He is, He is everywhere, and that is why He cannot be sought for.

The talk then turned on the Master's illness and the danger of its being aggravated through excessive spiritual emotion.

*Sarcar (to Sri Ramakrishna)* : Please control your feelings. I also feel deep emotions, and can dance more than yourselves.

*Ch. Naren (smiling)* : Suppose your emotion becomes stronger, what will you do ?

*Sarcar* : My controlling power also will grow greater.

*Sri R. and M.* : That is what you *think* !

*M.* : How can you say what will happen when you are in ecstasy ?

The conversation then drifted to money matters. Sri Ramakrishna said to Dr. Sarcar, "I never have any desire for money—You know all that ? What ?—No, it is no fun !"

*Sarcar* : Even *I* have no desire for it, what to speak of you ! My box lies open, full of money—

*Sri R.* : Jadu Mallick also was similarly absent-minded. While at meal, he would go on eating whatever was placed before him, well cooked or ill. If

some one would tell him not to take a certain course which was ill prepared, he would exclaim, 'Eh, this curry is bad? Yes, so it is indeed! Ugh!'

Did the Master suggest that there was a world of difference between absent-mindedness due to intense thought of God and that arising out of worldly thoughts?

Pointing to the Doctor, the Master remarked to the devotees, "When a thing is boiled, it becomes soft. He (Doctor) was very 'hard' but now he is softening from within."

*Sarcar* : A thing when boiled, begins to soften from the outside and not from within. It seems my case is hopeless this time. (*All laugh*).

Before taking his leave, Dr. Sarcar again remonstrated with Sri Ramakrishna, saying, "Can you not forbid people from taking the dust of your feet?"

*Sri R.* : Can everyone grasp the idea of the Absolute Brahman?

*Sarcar* : That is no reason why you should not tell them the truth.

*Sri R.* : There are differences of temperament and capacity.

*Sarcar* : What are these again?

*Sri R.* : Do you know what are differences of temperament?—Some relish fish as a soup, some as fried, some as a sour preparation, others as *polao*. And this is what is meant by differences of capacity :—I say, first learn to shoot at a plaintain tree, then at a wick, and then shoot a bird on wings.

## II

### [INSTRUCTIONS TO THE HOUSEHOLDER ASPIRANT]

And slowly the day ended and it became dark. The Master plunged into a deep meditation. He was so seriously ill! But the illness seemed to be cast off for a time! A few intimate disciples sat watching him. And

for a long time the Master did not rise from his meditation.....

As he came down to the normal plane, the Master said to Mani who was sitting near him, " My mind had been lost in the Absolute Brahman. And then I saw a vision—oh, it is a long story ! I saw Doctor—yes, he will realise, but after some time, he won't require to be told much. And I saw another, and a desire arose in my mind to accept him also. I'll tell you about him afterwards. " \*

Sj. Shyam Basu, Dr. Dokari and a few other gentlemen came to see the Master. After some preliminary conversation, Shyam Basu exclaimed, " Ah, what a very beautiful thing you said the other day ! "

*Sri R. (smiling) :* What was that ?

*Shyam :* I mean your description of the state which is beyond both Ignorance and Knowledge.

*Sri R. (smiling) :* That state is called *Vijnana*. Knowledge of the many is called Ignorance. To know God as existing in all beings is called Knowledge. To know Him *intimately* is called *Vijnana* (Special Knowledge). This Special Knowledge, *Vijnana*, consists in conversing with God and feeling Him as one's own. Wood is combustible, and therefore contains the principle of fire,—to know this is called *Jnana* (Knowledge). But to kindle a fire with the wood, to cook rice over that fire and then to nourish one's body with that rice, is called *Vijnana*.

*Shyam (smiling) :* Also how you narrated the parable of the thorns !

*Sri R. (smiling) :* Yes, just as when a thorn is lodged in our sole, we procure another thorn with which

\*Thus in the depths of Samadhi, Sri Ramakrishna would often learn the spiritual potentiality and the future of those who would come to him and guide them accordingly.

we take it out, and then throw both of them away ; similarly in order to drive away Ignorance we acquire Knowledge, and when Ignorance is destroyed, throw both Knowledge and Ignorance away. Then it is called *Vijnana*.

The Master felt pleased with Shyam Basu. The latter was advanced in age and desirous of spending his remaining days in the contemplation of God. Having heard of Sri Ramakrishna he had paid him a visit a few days ago. The Master said to him, " Give up entirely all talk about worldly things. Never speak of any thing except God, and whenever you see a worldly man, leave the place before he reaches you. You have enough experience of the world to understand that it is all hollow. God alone is real, all else is false. He indeed is eternal, all else are evanescent. What is there in the world ? It is like an acid soup prepared of hogplums ; you feel tempted to take it, but what is there in the hogplum ?—only the rind and the stone, and it brings on colic pain when taken ! "

*Shyam* : Yes, sir, what you say is quite true.

*Sri R.* : You have been engaged in worldly affairs for many a long year. It won't be possible for you now to meditate on the Lord within the turmoil of the world,—you must repair into solitude. Without solitude, the mind will not become steady and calm. Therefore you must prepare a place for meditation at some distance from your house.

On hearing this, Shyam Basu remained silent, seemingly absorbed in some deep thought. . . Sri Ramakrishna again said to him : " This world is, as it were, a mixture of sand and sugar ; and like the ant, one has to separate the sugar from the sand ; and he indeed is truly clever who can do it. Do you just prepare a solitary place for your meditation. Just do it, I'll also visit it once. "

After a while Shyam Basu asked the Master, " Sir, is reincarnation true ? Has one to be born again ? "

*Sri R.* : Pray to Him sincerely, He will enlighten you, if He so wills. First be acquainted with Jadu Mallik, then he himself will tell you what wealth and how many houses he has. *It is not good to try to know these things beforehand.* First realise God, then He will let you know whatever He desires.

*Shyam* : Sir, man in the world commits many crimes and does many sinful things,—can that man realise God ?

*Sri R.* : If a man devotes himself to God-realisation towards the close of his life, and dies while practising *sadhana*, calling upon the Lord, when can sin find an opportunity of getting at him ? It is true that the nature of the elephant is such that it will cover itself with mud and dust even after it is washed. But if it is directly taken into the stable as soon as it is bathed, it cannot soil itself any more.

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## SRI SANKARACHARYA : A STUDY

SWAMI ASOKANANDA

OUR purpose in writing the following lines in celebration of the birthday anniversary of Sri Sankaracharya (which this year fell on the twenty-eighth, April), is to draw the careful attention of the readers of the *Vedanta Kesari* to the deep significance underlying three important facts of his life, which we believe have very useful lessons to impart to us. They are : (A) His birth in a Nambudri family ; (B) His preaching of the Advaita philosophy ; and (C) The harmony of his rigid monistic outlook with his dualistic practices, such as the installation of Tantrik *chakras* in certain maths and temples, or composition of beautiful devotional hymns in praise of Gods and Goddesses.

### [A]

On the surface, the question why he was born of Nambudri parents may appear unmeaning and fatuous. Surely one has no control on where one is born !—it will be said. This is somewhat true of the ordinary man. But tradition has it that great souls like Sankara can predetermine their nativity. Without however seeking occult reasons, we shall try to draw out the full significance of the instance in question.

Sankara came to revive the Vedic religion. Naturally his early life required a nurture and environments which were helpful towards the fulfilment of his life's mission. Now, it is well-known that in those days of disintegration, the knowledge of the Vedas was practically unknown in Northern India, and it happened to be conserved and preserved mostly among the South Indian Brahmins. Thus it came about that the Reviver of the Vedic religion found the requisite intellectual and spiritual atmosphere in the home of one who belonged to the most conservative of the communities of the Southern Brahmins.

Nor was it accidental that the Vedic knowledge was found so conserved among the Southern Brahmins. Underlying it, there is a deep truth of the Hindu social evolution. Every society really develops through an interaction of liberal and

conservative forces. In the Hindu society, the Brahmans represent the conservative element, holding sacred and inviolable every tradition and custom, keeping wakeful watch on the frontiers of its dominions against unwarranted entrances and exits, and handing down the wisdom of our fathers seasoned and chastened by the experience of ages, intact to the generations of posterity. The liberal element was typified by the Kshatriyas who unfortunately are now no more existent, and is perhaps functioning through other communities. It inaugurated new reforms and propagated new ideas, but was always respectfully submissive to the veto of the conservative Brahman. Between them was held steady and balanced the helm of the national bark. Neither of them can be allowed to hold unchecked sovereign sway, or eliminated without great peril to the life of the nation. It does not matter which communities represent them ; but they must function in the society. It is extreme ignorance to accuse a particular class for having discharged what is after all a national function. It is simply enacting the ludicrous fable of the stomach and the limbs. As it is, the task of the Brahmans is a thankless one. But when the extreme liberalism of the Buddhistic reform forced the portals of the mother church wide open for all sorts of civilized, semi-civilized and savage races and their indigenous customs and traditions to enter in, had there not been the steadying and controlling influences of conservatism as represented by the Brahmans, Hinduism to-day would have been nowhere, and India's culture and civilisation would have become the pet study of a few Indologists. Indeed without the conservative Brahmans, the Vedic knowledge would have expired and there would not have been a Sankara to resuscitate Hinduism and save it from complete annihilation. Let those who are now for eating up the Brahmans remember that it is rather difficult to walk on one leg.

[B]

We shall next consider the other event : Why Sankara was pre-eminently a teacher of Advaita philosophy. The obvious reply of course is : Because as a philosopher he thought monism the most correct philosophy and the real objective of the Shastras. We may, however, discern a deeper meaning in his choice of his philosophy, if we look deeper. The

charge is levelled against him that in order to support his own "ism," he has sometimes twisted the legitimate meaning of many Vedic texts. It is true that the Upanishads not only advocate the monistic, but also the dualistic and qualified monistic ideals. Sankara was a great scholar and was certainly expected to know the true purpose of the scriptural texts. If then he chose to emphasise only the monistic aspect of the Shastras, he surely had very valid reasons for so doing. They were, to our thinking, the re-establishment of the ideal of Renunciation and the enunciation of Hinduism in its purest form. Those were days when in the name of religion, most horrid things were practised. Hinduism had to be released from the grips of that terrible ritualism. The revival of Vedic ritualism as inaugurated by Kumarila and other *Karmakandins*, helped to a certain extent this much-wanted work of purification. But Hinduism could not regain its pristine purity until and unless, it was boldly enunciated that in its essentials, it has nothing whatever to do with rites and ceremonies. How interesting in this connection is the discussion, in Sankara's commentary on the first aphorism of the *Vedanta Darsanam*, on the inter-relation of the Vedic ritualism and *Brahma-Vidya* ! This bold stand against ceremonialism is possible to be made by Advaitism alone,—dualism cannot divest itself absolutely of rites and ceremonies. Similarly, it is monism which is the true basis of the doctrine of renunciation. Though God-realisation is the ideal of all the various sections of Hinduism, and various ways are prescribed as leading to that goal, yet of all those methods of realisation, renunciation—*Tyaga* and *Vairagya*—is held to be an indispensable element.—“By Renunciation alone, man attains to Immortality,”—says the Upanishad. Now, as has been said before, this doctrine of renunciation finds its philosophy in Advaitism alone. “Brahman alone is true, the world is false”—this dictum is the basis of Renunciation, and this no other philosophy declares. Hence it is that he who came to re-install Hinduism on its ancient pedestal of glory, found in Advaitism alone his proper instrument. A reviver of Hinduism, a propounder of the ideal of renunciation could not but demonstrate the utter futility and unreality of the world, the antithesis of the Real which is Brahman. For, the moment, any reality, be it dependent on or independent of God, is ascribed to the world, a dual ideal is set before the

mind of man, and consequently the allegiance of his soul undergoes a bipartite division. God *and* a few of the good things of the world,—such becomes the ideal of man, and thus is jeopardised the very soul of Hinduism.

From this, however, it does not follow that all Hindus must become monists. Temperaments will differ and necessitate different religious ideals. Hence dualistic and quasi-monistic ideals are equally valid Hinduism. But the method must in every case be renunciation, there is no other way, no other way ! And it is noteworthy that all teachers, of whatever school, have never failed to impress on their followers the need of complete renunciation of the world as an absolute condition of God-realisation.

### [C]

This explanation, or rather interpretation of why Sankara preached monism, is corroborated by a singular fact that the teacher who ascribed to Iswara, the Personal God, only a phenomenal existence in his philosophy, was also a writer of some of the most beautiful devotional hymns in praise of Gods and Goddesses, and the terms applied to the Gods and Goddesses in those invocations are often those attributed to Brahman Himself. An attempt is sometimes made to rescue Sankara from this anomalous situation by questioning the genuineness of the hymns themselves. It is argued that Sankara was not responsible for them, they were composed by unknown persons. This is too sweeping a judgment. It may be true of some, but not all the hymns. The fact is that Sankara, though *philosophically* an uncompromising monist (for reasons as set forth in [B]), admitted yet the *equality* of the *religious* value of both monistic and dualistic worship. For him, therefore, there was no such psychological clash as may superficially appear. This synthetic outlook of his, in fact, made him not only the great reviver of Hindu ideals which he was, but also a great constructive power with which was leavened the low rites of worship up to the level of the highest spirituality. In his time the land was full of the worship of various gods and goddesses, bequeathed by decadent Buddhism and sponsored by left-handed Tantrikism. That worship was scarcely conducted with the desire for real spiritual gain, but mostly for acquiring occult powers in order to satisfy the lower instincts of the mind. It had either to be

abolished or reconstituted before the desired reformation of Hinduism could be achieved. True to the genius of Hinduism, Sankara did not wage a destructive war against it, on the other hand, exalted it through a higher interpretation to the level of the highest worship. And soon instead of ministering to the base esoteric purposes of its votaries, it became a potent means of realising the Divine. This interpretative method was one of the essential ways by which Sankara achieved the reformation of our religion so signally within so short a time. His hymns and other dualistic attempts testify only to this reforming activity. This weapon had been wielded by others before him, but in his hands it became invincible.

And it has not outlived its purpose. This particular aspect of Sankara's reform activities keenly reminds us there are perhaps even now many new modes of worship outside the pale of religion, waiting to be welcomed into its bosom. Shall we never open our eyes ?

Great ones do not die. The ordinary man is forgotten soon after his mortal vesture is consumed in the funeral pyre. But the Shining Ones shine brighter by having passed across the gate of death. The brightest, however, are the spiritual leaders of mankind. They leave messages for all times. Such a one is Sankara. The work of the regeneration of true Hinduism which he inaugurated twelve centuries ago is not yet done. It is only half accomplished. May his blessings empower us to push forward with his divine mission !

SWAMI ASOKANANDA

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## SHAKTHI : WHAT IT IS AND WHAT IT IS NOT

K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRI, B. A., B. L.

THE word "Shakthi" is largely and grossly misunderstood in India and abroad. Some persons call it "lust and mummery and magic." Others call it "force" or "power." Yet others regard it as a form of materialism. There are others who regard it as a call to license and licentiousness. All these views are based on sheer misconception or ignorance or perversity. There are others who set up conflicts among *Srutis*, *Smrithis*, *Puranas* and *Agamas* and regard them as contradictory or irreconcilable or even mutually exclusive. Some others try to reconcile them by assigning one of them to each Yuga. Some Tantras thus appropriate the Kali Yuga to themselves and throw the other *Pramanas* overboard. We must know the true meaning of such passages. Their object is only to increase the faith in that *Sadhana* for that *Sadhaka*. *Arya Dharma* is inclusive and perfect and complete. He who quarrels with his brother Hindu for its sake is ignorant of its essence. *Dharma* means the law of true being by which such being is realised and expressed and maintained. It is the state of equilibrium attained by the expression of the true and innermost nature. Such effort to maintain such equilibrium involves the element of order (representing the level attained) and the element of progress (representing the crescent triumph over obstacles yet remaining and obstructing the true expression of such nature). Such perfect self-expression over true nature and such perfect harmonious inter-relations of beings can be only in the *Sudha Sattwa* or *Aprakrita* Paradise. In all the *Trigunamaya* worlds there will be greater or lesser attainment of equilibrium. Such forward and backward surge and resurgence are expressed by the Indian conception of *Yugas*. The general feature of *Aryan Dharma* is this great truth that the true nature of our being should be realised as *Sachchidananda*, the *sadhana* or means being the carrying out of *Dharma* in a spirit of *Karma Yoga*.

From this common centre, a number of radii branch out towards the infinite. The Indian conceptions of *Ishta*

*Sadhana* and *Ishta Devata* account for the seeming multiplicity, nay the seeming confusion and chaos, of Hinduism. There are numerous schools of Indian philosophy (Adwaita, Visishtadwaita, Dwaita, Sudhadwaita, etc.). There are numerous devotional cults (Saivism, Vaishnavism, Saktism, etc.). There are innumerable *yogic sadhanas*, *mantras*, *mudras*, *tantrika vidyas* or *upasanas*, *vaidika vidyas* or *upasanas*, sacrifices, magical words and mystical syllables, etc. Each sect praises itself and abuses others. In this bewildering confusion there must surely be a way which a man who is sick of the blatant noises of the vendors of rival nostrums can find and use for his soul's truest and highest auspiciousness.

One great truth is that each sect's positive affirmations are true from its angle of vision. But its negations and exclusions and angry mud-slings on other sects and their doctrines are generally wrong. I have tried to show in my book on *Bhagawad Gita : The Divine Path to God*, the only perfect and divine synthesis of Hindu Dharma as uttered by God Himself. Just as Sri Krishna has the entire universe of souls and objects as His body, so the Gita has the entire cosmos of the universal cults and philosophies and religions as its body.

In Shaktism the Divine Principle is worshipped in the form of Shakthi or Devi. God's *prema* and *daya* (love and compassion) are felt by us more intimately in our conception of the Motherhood of God than in our conception of the Fatherhood of God. The Supreme Parabrahma is called Siva. His Shakthi or Devi is His aspect of Love to the universe. Such Shakthi is the mother of mind as well as of matter. It has the aspects of *Ichcha Shakthi*, *Jnana Shakthi* and *Kriya Shakthi*. In Her supreme *Mayamaya* or *Sudha Sattwa* or *Aprakrita* form She is the Mahadevi from whom even the Trimurthis emerge by way of manifestation. All the thirty-six Tattwas from Moola Prakrithi (primordial matter) to the Pancheekrita Brahmanda (the manifested cosmos) proceed from Her and by the power of Her will (*Sankalpa*). The Tamo Guna predominates in them. The Rajo Guna predominates in the *avidya* sheaths, the selves embodied in which are called jivas. The true nature of each self is *Sachchidananda*. The true human evolution is in the direction of increasing *Sattwa Guna* till the perfection of *Sadhanas* results in our *Mukthi* by the attainment of the lotus

feet of the Devi. If we seek the *Nirguna Brahma Sakshat-kara*, it will be Her gift to us. That is why She is called in *Lalita Sahasranama* as *Sivajnana Pradayini*.

Thus the Tantras are amplifications of the Vedic Truth from another angle of vision. *Tantra* is derived from *tan* (extension) and *tra* (saving), and thus it means the body of doctrine which is an extension of the Vedic doctrine and which gives additional *sadhanas* which are simple and sure and sweet for the attainment of God-realisation. Further, *Tantrika* *Sadhanas* are open to all castes and to both sexes. They were not meant to displace or supplant *Vaidika* *Sadhanas* but to supplement them. They are *Shaktha* or *Saiva* or *Vaishnava* according as the *Saguna Brahma* aspect described is *Devi* or *Siva* or *Vishnu*. The source of them all is in the *Devi Sukta* of *Rig Veda* and in the one hundred and eight *Upanishads* among which are found *Adwaita* and *Saiva* and *Vaishnava* and *Shaktha* doctrines and *sadhanas*. When the *Agamas* themselves claim to be based on the *Vedas* and when their Revealer is the same *Paramatma* who gave the *Sruthis*, what right have we to abuse the *Agamas* or to damn the *Sruthis* with faint praise and assign them away to *Krita Yuga* ?

It is thus wrong to import any concept of sex into the Supreme. The *Shakthi Tantras* worship the *Saguna Brahma* as having an *aprakrita* or a *suddha sattwa* female form. Why should the *Saguna Brahma* be compelled to have a masculine form alone ? The *Shaktha sadhanas*, or *samskaras* (sacraments) are an extension and a supplement of *Vaidika sadhanas* and *samskaras*.

In short, the *Shakthi Tantra* fulfils and completes the Vedic ideas about what is called *Maya* (or *Prakriti* or *Avidya*). The matrix is *Chit Sakthi* or *Suddha Sattwa* or *Maya* or *Aprakrita Sakthi*. When *Tamo Guna* is predominant we call it matter. When *Rajo Guna* is predominant we call it *Jiva* ; and when *Sattwa Guna* is predominant we call it divinity. When pure *Sattwa* is absolutely manifested, we call it *Parameswara*. The *Atman* in the state of self-identifying relation to mind and senses and body is called *Jiva*. *Chit Sakthi* is thus higher than the *Trigunamaya* manifestation of *Shakthi*. It is not a negation of our ordinary consciousness ; but it is a completion, a fulfilment, a trans-

ceadence of our consciousness. It is pure being and consciousness and bliss (*Sachchidananda*). It is Saguna in relation to the universe and Nirguna in itself. From the standpoint of the Absolute there is eternal Sachchidananda and the Vivarta Vada alone applies. From the standpoint of the *Jiva*, the Chit Shakthi of Para Brahman is the cause of the eternal being of Saguna Brahma, and God's Maya Shakthi projects the universe of name and form. Here the Parinama Vada applies. Maya Shakthi is the cosmic seed whence has come this wonderful cosmic *aswatha* (banyan) tree. The same is the *mental* Shakthi that cognises the universe and also the Prana Shakthi which holds the mind and the senses and the body in a state of integration. *Maya* or *Mula Prakriti* or *Avyakta* (whichever we hold to be the proper name) manifests itself as the three Gunas (*Vikritis*) whence have come mind and life and matter as three lives of evolution. As we rise from plane to plane of *Shakthi* our realisation rises from pluralism to dualism and thence to monism. The Gunas are self-veiled aspects of *Chit*. When we rise to the plane of *Chit*, all the disintegrations seen from the plane of Gunas disappear and we enjoy eternal and infinite Sachchidananda.. Just as science has pushed the seemingly solid walls of matter and shows matter to be only a mode of energy, so religion has pushed the seemingly solid walls of energy and shows energy only to be a mode of self-veiled Sachchidananda.

It is thus clear that Shaktism is in a line with the highest Vedic thought. There may be minor differences between it and other schools of Vedic thought. But it has certainly as honourable and honoured a shrine in the Vedic temple as any other shrine of thought therein. It, however, specially emphasises the aspect of *sadhana*s, *mantra*, *mudra*, *lakshya*, *yoga*, etc. *Mantra* is not mere meaningless chatter or jabber. It is a means of Divine realisation. Akasa is the primary energy. Mantra is a means of setting up in it harmonious and divine vibrations. *Sabda* is the *guna* or quality of Akasa, air being only a means of its transmission. Conceived in this way the efficacy of divine mantras becomes quite easy of comprehension. Sound has a supersubtle, subtle, half-manifested, and a fully manifested form (*Para*, *Pasyanti* *Madhyama*, and *Vaikhari* forms). In each divine mantra is stored up primal energy which can be realised by us from highest spiritual good. In the same way the Shaktha

ritual and worship have the same purpose and result. Its methods of Pranaprathishta in the case of images are peculiar to it. Its use of *yantras* is another peculiarity. Its use of *nyasa* and *mudra* are other peculiarities. These upasana elements are perfected into Parabhakthi or Parajñana (which are really one in essence). The Shaktha doctrine emphasises also the importance of Raja Yoga and Laya Yoga besides stressing Hatha Yoga and Mantra Yoga.

Thus the Shaktha doctrine is full of beauty and purity and holiness. It has come into bad odour because of its *Vama Marga* aspect and the use of the five *makaras* in the latter. But the *Vama* aspect is stated in the *Agastya Sutras* to be open to the classes to whom flesh and wine are not forbidden while the *Dakshina* aspect is for those classes who have given them up as forbidden. Further, *Vama Marga* is for those who have attained purity and mantra siddhi and go through the ritual for rituals' sake and not for indulging in forbidden delights in a spirit of passion. Further, it is a means of purifying natural passion by introducing into it a divine principle. After all true Shakthism aims at reaching Devi and not at attaining physical enjoyment. The worship has to rise to the real and higher five *makaras* which are psychical states and not physical things at all. Just as in Vaidika karmas there are rituals free from meat, etc., and rituals not free from meat, etc., so also we have two varieties of Tantrik rituals. There is a passage in the Srimad Ramayana in which Sri Rama says : "*Yadannah Purusho Bhavathi Tadannastasya Devatah*" (Whatsoever food a man takes, that food is what his deity accepts)—(*Ayodhya Kanda, Sarga 102*). Whatever might be the excuses offered or occult explanations given in respect of Panchamakara, the sooner meat and wine and sexuality (*mamsa, madya and maithuna*) are divorced from the company of *mantra* and *mudra*, the better it will be for Shakthism.

Thus true Shakthism is true spirituality. It has a specially attractive appeal because of its emphasis on the Motherhood of God. Its philosophy is subtle and comprehensive and its *sadhanas* are varied and catholic and inclusive. In short *Shakti* is not a mere force or power in the physical sense. It is the power of renunciation of the fruits of actions, the power of service, the power of concentration, the power

of devotion, the power of realised knowledge, the power of love, the power of transcendental being, the power of transcendental consciousness, and the power of transcendental bliss. To use the lovely and holy words of *Lalita Sahasranama*, *Chit Kala Ananda Kalika Prema Rupa Priyamkari*.

K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRI, B. A., B. L.

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## GLEANINGS

### INFLUENCE OF BUDDHISM ON VEDANTA\*

NARMADASHANKAR D. MEHTA

#### (1) *Allegations of Covert Buddhism in Vedanta.*

During my studies of Indian Philosophy I was struck by the accusation of "Covert Buddhist" brought against Sankaracharya the first exponent of the Modern School of Vedanta. The popular belief among the followers of Sankaracharya is that he was a strong opponent of Buddhism; that the Buddhists were routed from India by his elder contemporary Kumarila—a Mimamsaka; and that what little influence of Buddhism was left in India after the death of Kumarila was wiped off by the teaching of Sankara based on the texts of the Upanishads, the Gita and the Brahma Sutras. The charge of "Covert Buddhist" brought against Sankara is thus apparently incongruous with the popular belief that he was an opponent of Buddhism. But the fact persists that the orthodox interpreters of the Prasthanatraya (trio of Upanishads, Gita and Brahma Sutra) regard the Maya Vada of Sankara as a heresy engrafted on the teaching of the Veda from the Buddhistic plant. The intellectuals of India have all along believed against the popular view that Sankara's interpretation of the three Canonical books of the Vedanta is altogether a new interpretation which violates the natural sense of the texts. I intend to discuss in this paper what are the *prima facie* grounds for holding that Sankara's School of Vedanta is "Covert Buddhism".

#### (2) *Allusions in Padmapurana to the novel interpretation of the Veda.*

The earliest reference to this accusation is to be found in the Padmapurana (Uttara Khanda 264-69-75).

Although the exact date by which the Padmapurana in its present form was compiled is not ascertainable, it is approximately correct to believe that this Purana was codified prior to the tenth century when Buddhism was really extinct in India, and when Pauranic form of Hinduism had established itself in full force. The idea that the Vedic ritual was unnecessary for securing salvation as propounded by the new School of Vedanta was an innovation in Hinduism, and the Purana alludes to the doctrine as a heresy. The following is a free rendering of the text of the Padma Purana.

"The Buddhistic Sastra was propounded by God Vishnu incarnated in the form of Buddha for the purpose of destroying demons. It is a false doctrine and is a naked or overt heresy. There is also another

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Sastra based on the doctrine of Illusion which is called a Covert Buddhistic doctrine. It has been covertly taught, oh dear (Parvati), in this Kali age by God in a Brahman form. In this latter Sastra the doctrine that the Vedic ritual ought to be abandoned—a position which is contrary to the Vedic texts and which is hated by the people—is propounded. The renunciation of all action is nothing but irreligion. Again in this Sastra the doctrine of the identity of the individual soul with the Supreme Being is expounded by me (God Siva); the essential nature of Brahman as devoid of all attributes is also taught by me in the Kali age which is for the deception of the whole world. This Maha Sastra which is non-Vedic on account of Maya is preserved by me like the Veda for the destruction of the world."

दैत्यानां नाशनार्थाय विष्णुना बुद्धरूपिणा ।  
 बौद्धशास्त्रमसत्प्रोक्त ननिनील्यशोदकम् ॥ ६९ ॥  
 मायावादमसच्छास्त्रं प्रच्छन्नं बौद्धमुच्यते ।  
 तथैव कथितं देवि कलौ ब्राह्मणरूपिणा ॥ ७० ॥  
 अपार्थश्रुतिवाक्यानां दर्शयै लोकगर्हितम् ।  
 कर्मस्वरूपत्याज्यत्वमतैव प्रतिपाद्यते ॥ ७१ ॥  
 सर्वकर्मपरिभ्रष्टं वैधर्म्यत्वं तदुच्यते ।  
 परेशजीवयोरेक्यं मयातु प्रतिपाद्यते ॥ ७२ ॥  
 ब्रह्मणोऽस्य स्वयं रूपं निर्गुणं वक्ष्यते मया ।  
 सर्वस्य जगतोऽप्यत्र मोहनार्थं कलौ युगे ॥ ७३ ॥  
 वेदार्थवन्महाशास्त्रं मायया यद्वैदिकम् ।  
 मयैव रक्ष्यते देवि जगतां नाशकारणात् ॥ ७४ ॥

The above text of the Purana in the mouth of Siva, teaching his wife Parvati, produces two impressions, prevailing among the masses of the times : (1) That the Buddha was then regarded as an incarnation of Vishnu, and yet the Buddha Shastra was considered to be *naked* heresy by the orthodox Hindus. (2) That Sankara (referred to as a Brahmana) was regarded as the incarnation of Siva, and the Maha Shastra—the doctrine of the Mahayana School of Buddhism—engrafted on the Vedic text was considered to be covert heresy.

This is the clear interpretation of the Pauranic text. The word "Maha Shastra" is significant. The Vedantic idealism had its immediate predecessor in the *Vijnanavada* of the Yogachara School, and the doctrine of Illusion was the direct outcome of the Madhyamic doctrine as propounded by Nagarjuna—a Buddhist.

(3) *Bhaskara Bhatta's attack on Sankara's interpretation of the Brahma Sutras.*

The first orthodox opponent of Sankara's School of Vedanta was Bhatta Bhaskara who flourished in the latter half of the tenth century A. D. His commentary on the Brahma Sutras has been recently rescued

and published in the Chaukhambha Sanskrit Series. This Bhaskara's School is known as Bhedabhedavada or the doctrine of (One) Unity and (many) multiplicity of Brahman as equally *real*. When Sankara was a pure monist, Bhaskara was both a monist and a pluralist. Sankara regarded Brahman or the Absolute as the only Reality of a conscious nature ; and treated the world as a mere phantom or appearance on that Absolute Real. The empirical world was superimposed upon the Real Brahman through Avidya Maya and it had no real existence apart from Brahman. Bhaskara thought that the Vedic teaching was neither monistic nor pluralistic. The causal state of Brahman was regarded as unity ; while the evolved nature of Brahman in the form of the phenomenal world was regarded as multiplicity. But the unity and multiplicity were both equally real. The cause and effect are two aspects of the one and the same substance and we have no reason to suppose that the effect is illusory while the cause alone is real. Bhaskara was, therefore, a pure evolutionist (Parinamavadi) and not a mere phenomenalist (Vivarthavadi) like Sankara. There are two distinct allusions to foreign influence on Sankaracharya in Bhaskara's commentary on Brahma Sutra. He opens his commentary with a remark:—

(1) "I have taken up the work of explaining this Sastra with the sole object of removing the impression of erroneous interpretation put on the text by some who hide the true sense of the aphorisms, and who prominently bring out their own views in interpretation."

(2) Again while commenting on Brahma Sutra (1-4-26) Bhaskara lays great stress on the word *Parinama* occurring in the sutra *Athmakriha Parinamath*—Brahman is the inherent cause of the universe (and not merely an instrumental cause) because it is evolved in the form of the world by its innate activity—and adds that "Those who propound the theory of Illusion or Maya from the Brahma Sutras are spinning out the theory like the Gathas of the Mahayanic Buddhists which have no authentic text behind their back, and are thereby deceiving the people." Again, "those Mayavadis who are Buddhistic in their doctrine should be considered to have been refuted by this very argument by the Sutra-kara himself."

(4) *Vijnanabhikshu* (A. D. 1650) regards the *Mayavada* of Vedanta as Buddhistic.

\* सूत्राभिप्रायसंवृत्या स्वाभिप्रायप्रकाशनात्  
व्याख्यातं यैरिदं शास्त्रं व्याख्येयं तन्निवृत्तये ॥  
तथाच वाक्यं परिणामस्तु स्यादध्यादिबत्—इति  
विच्छिन्नमूलं महायानिकबौद्धगाथयितं मायावादं  
व्यापण्यन्तो लोकान्व्यामोहयन्ति ॥  
ये तु बौद्धमतवलंबिनो मायावादिनस्तेऽप्यनेन  
न्यायेन निरस्ता वेदयितव्या ॥ १ ॥

The Sankhya—Patanjala philosopher, *Vijnanabhikshu*, both in his commentaries on Sankhya and Yoga Sutra texts as well as in his inde-

pendent commentary on Brahma Sutras called Vijñānamrita distinctly points out that Maya Vada is a new element of "Modern Vedantists." Apart from Vijñānabhikṣu's position, all Schools of Vedānta of the Dvaitins, Viśiṣṭādvaitins and Suddhādvaitins as represented by Madhva, Ramanuja and Vallabha respectively, are unanimous in holding that the author of the Brahma Sutras was an Evolutionist, (*Parināmavadi*), and not a Phenomenalist (*Vivarthavadi*) as Sankara tries to represent them.

(5) *Buddhistic elements in Vedānta are*

(a) Mayavada or Vivartavada, Doctrine of Illusion or Phenomenalism.

(b) Ajativada or Proudhivada Doctrines of "non-creation" or Absolutism.

I do not wish to enter into the question as to whether Mayavada has its germs in the Upanishads or its basis in the Brahma Sutras. Suffice it to say for our present purposes that, although Mayavada may be the logical outcome of the Vijñānavada or Idealism of the Upanishads, its full statement in a philosophical manner is to be found for the first time in Sankara's Vedāntic doctrine. Between the Upanishadic period and Sankara's period nearly twenty centuries have intervened. Some fourteen centuries of this long period have seen the rise and fall of Buddhism in India prior to Sankara's birth. This long period of Buddhist culture has metamorphosed the Brahmanic form of Religion and Philosophy into its modern Puranic form of Religion and Vedāntic view of Philosophy.

Now it is a recognised fact on all hands that Sankaracharya obtained his Sanyasa Diksha from Govindacharya; but he got his philosophic training from his grand Guru, Gauda Pada, the author of the well-known Mandukya Karikas. He is reported to have spent about 12 years with Gauda Pada before he wrote his Brahma Sutra Bhashya. Gauda Pada was an eminent scholar of the Sankhya School of Philosophy. His Bhashya on Ishwarkrishna's Sankhya Karikas is well known. He is also the author of Sakti Sutras which are not published. But there are distinct allusions thereto in Bhaskararai's commentary on Lalita Sahasranama. I have obtained a copy of the Sutras from a Sanyasi friend and I find that the Sutras embody the Sakta Cult of Advaitic type. I am also informed by the same ascetic that the stanzas quoted by Sankara, at the end of his commentary on the first four aphorisms, in support of his view, are an extract from the Gauda Pada Bhashya on the Brahma Sutras, a copy of which is reported to have been preserved in the Bagal Math in Southern India. I have not been able to verify the last statement. But one thing is certain viz. Sankara regards Gauda Pada as a repository of Advaitic doctrine and refers to him with great reverence. In the concluding stanzas of his Bhashya on the Mandukya Karika, Sankara distinctly states that his grand Guru has rescued the Advaita nectar from the Vedic ocean.

This Gauda Pada—an all-round scholar, a Sankhya, a Tantrika and Vedāntic of the idealistic school of the 8th Century—has imbibed



the Mahayanik Buddhistic teaching both in the letter and the spirit from his predecessors. Great Buddhistic teachers of the Vijnana-vada and Madhyamika Schools preceded Gauda Pada. They were Nagarjuna (250-320 A. D.) Maitreya (400 A. D.), Asanga (405-470 A. D.) and Vasubandhu (410-490 A. D.). The original Sanskrit texts of the Mahayana literature of the above Buddhistic thinkers have been lost for the most part. But the text of Nagarjuna's Madhyamika Karikas has been preserved.

What Nagarjuna is to the Madhyamika school of Buddhism, Gauda Pada is to the Kevaladvaita school of Vedanta. Nagarjuna (250—320 A. D.) was born at Vidarbha (modern Berar) in Mahakosol during the reign of Satavahana of the Andhra dynasty. He was not only a Buddhist but a Tantrik too. He was also recognised as an alchemist of the Saiva School or Rasa Darsana. He was one of the early patrons of the University of Nalanda. Lama Taranath says that Nagarjuna was a contemporary of King Nemichandra who is supposed to have reigned about 300 A. D. The latest date which can be assigned to Nagarjuna is 400 A. D. when his biography was translated into Chinese by Kumara Jiva. His philosophic works are :—

1. *Madhyamika Karika*,
2. *Vigrahav Vyavartana Karika*,
3. *Pramana Vidhvansana*, and
4. *Upaya Koushalya Hridaya Sastra*.

The original Sanskrit texts of Nos. 2, 3 and 4 are lost for ever. The text of No. 1 has been rescued and published in the Bibliotheca Buddhica Series as Serial No. IV. The study of Nagarjuna's Karikas with the help of Chandrakirti's comments reveals that Gauda Pada who flourished in the eighth century of the Christian Era got his inspiration of Maya Vada and Ajati Vada from Nagarjuna. I shall presently show how the very words of Gauda Pada (8th century) are borrowed from Nagarjuna (4th century) :—

*Nagarjuna's Karika (4th Century)*

(१) नागार्जुन अनिरोधमनुत्पादमनुच्छेदमशाश्वतम्  
 अनेकार्थमनानात्वं अनागममनिर्गमम्  
 यः प्रतीत्य समुत्पादं प्रपञ्चोपशमं शिवम्  
 देशयामास संबुद्धस्तं वंदे वदतांवरम् 1-1  
 प्रपञ्चपति ये बुद्धम् प्रपञ्चाति तमप्ययम्  
 ते प्रपञ्चकृता, सर्वं न पश्यन्ति तथागतम् ॥

*Gauda Pada's Karika (8th century)*

गौडपाद प्रपंचोपशमं शान्तं शिवमद्वैतं चतुर्थं

मन्यते स आत्मा सविज्ञेयः

मांदूक्य 3-7

वीतरागभयक्रोधैर्मुनिभिर्वेदपारगैः

निर्विकल्पो ह्ययं दृष्टः प्रपंचोपशमोऽद्वयः ॥ II-34

ज्ञानमाकाशकल्पे न धर्मान्यो गगनोपमान्

ज्ञेया भिन्नेन संबुद्धस्तं वंदे द्विपदां वरम् IV-1

२ नागा. यथा माया यथा स्वप्ने गंधर्वनगरं यथा

तथोत्पादस्तथास्थानं तथा भंग उदाहृतः ॥ VII-34

क्लेशाः कर्माणि देहाश्चकर्तारश्च फलानिच

गंधर्वनगराकाश मरीचिस्वप्नसंनिभा ॥ XVII-33

गौड. स्वप्नमाये यथा दृष्टे गंधर्वनगरं यथा

तथा विश्वमिदं दृष्टं वेदान्तेषु विचक्षणैः II-31

३ नागा. स्वभाव कृतकोनाम भविष्यतिकथं पुनः ।

अकृत्स्निः स्वभावोहि निरपेक्ष परत्रच XV-2

यद्यस्तित्वं प्रकृत्यास्यान्नभवेदस्यनास्तित्वा

प्रकृतेरन्यथा भावो नहि जातूपपद्यते ॥ XV-8

गौड. स्वभावेनामृतो यस्याभावो गच्छति मर्त्यताम्

कृतकेनामृतस्तस्य कथं स्थास्यतिनिश्चलः ॥ II-22

न भवत्यमृतं मर्त्यं नमर्त्यममृतं तथा ।

प्रकृतेरन्यथा भावो न कथंचिद् भविष्यति ॥ II-21

४ नागा नस्वतो जायते भावः परतो नैव जायते ।

न स्वतः परतश्चैव जायते ज्ञायते कुतः । XIX-13

न स्वतो नाऽपि परतो द्वाभ्यांवा नाप्यहेतुतः ।

उत्पन्ना जातु विद्यन्ते भावाः कचनकेचन ॥ I-1

गौड. स्वतोवा परतोवाऽपि न किंचिद्वस्तु जायते ।

सदसत्सदसद्वापि न किंचिद् वस्तु जायत ॥ IV-22

५ नागा. शून्यमाध्यात्मिकं पश्य पश्य शून्यं बहिर्गतम्

न विद्यतेसोऽपि कश्चिद्यो भावयति शून्यताम् ॥ I-348

अपरप्रत्ययं शांतं प्रपंचैरप्रपंचितम्

निर्विकल्प मनानार्थमेतत्तत्त्वस्य लक्षणम् ॥ XVIII-9

गौड. तत्त्वमाध्यात्मिकं दृष्टुतत्त्वं दृष्ट्वा तु बाह्यतः

■ तत्त्वीभूतस्तथारामस्तत्त्वादप्रच्युतो भवेत् ॥ II-38

६ नागा. निर्ममो निरहंकारो यश्चसोऽपिनविद्यते  
निर्ममं निरहंकारं यः पश्यति स पश्यति ॥ v 1. XVIII-3

गौड. निस्तुतिर्निनमस्कारो निःस्वधाकार एवच  
चलाचल निकेतश्च यतिर्यादृच्छिको भवेत् ॥ II-37

७ नागा. अस्तीति शाश्वतग्राहो नास्तीत्युल्लेखददर्शनम्  
तस्मादस्तित्वनास्तित्वे नाश्रीयेत विचक्षणः ॥  
यदस्तित्वत्वेन न तन्नास्तीतिशाश्वतम्  
नास्तीदानीमभूत्पूर्वमित्युल्लेखः प्रसज्यते ॥ XV-10  
अस्तित्वं येतुपश्यति नास्तित्वं चाल्पबुद्धयः  
भावानां ते य पश्यति द्रष्टव्योपशमं शिवम् ॥ V-8

गौड. अस्तिनास्त्यस्तिनास्तीतिनास्तिनास्तीतिवापुनः ।  
चलस्थिरो यथा भावैरावृणोत्येव बालिशः ॥  
कोठ्यश्चतस्र एतत्स्तु ग्रहैर्यासा सहावृतः  
भगवानाभिरस्पृष्टो येन दृष्टः स सर्वदृक् IV-83, 84

८ नागा. द्वेसत्ये समुपाश्रित्यबुद्धानां धर्मदर्शना  
लोकसंवृत्तिसंत्य चत्यं च परमार्थतः ॥

गौड. उपलंभात्समाचारादस्तित्वस्तुत्ववादिनाम्  
जातिस्तुदेशिता बुद्धजातेस्त्रसतां सदा ॥  
योऽस्ति कल्पितसंवृत्या परमार्थेननास्त्यसौ  
परतंत्राभिसंवृत्या स्यान्नास्ति परमार्थतः I-73

I have selected only eight texts of Nagarjuna and Gauda Pada ii. parallel columns to show the influence of Buddhistic Vijnana Vada on Vedantic Theory.

Turning to the first text we may note that in the Madhyamika School of Buddhism the two extremes of philosophic thought are avoided and a middle course is adopted. Just as in the religion of ethics, virtue is the mean, so Nagarjuna says that Philosophical truth lies in the middle path. The term Madhyamika is defined as under :—

अतो भावा भावान्तद्वयरहितत्वात्सर्वस्वभावानुत्पत्तिरक्षणा शून्यता मध्यमा प्रति-  
पद् मध्यमो मार्ग इत्युच्यते.

That is the Buddhistic middle path in which there is neither the extreme of existence nor the extreme of non-existence. In its path a middle consciousness is recognised in which each object is essentially regarded as unproduced. This kind of consciousness in which extremes are avoided is called Sunyata or middle conviction.

In the first text Nagarjuna propounds a theory based on the Buddha's own teaching that the phenomenal world (*Prathisa Samuth-patha*—dependent origination) has neither cessation nor creation, is

neither destructible nor indestructible, is neither one nor many, is neither appearing nor disappearing. The essential nature of things according to Nagarjuna is devoid of all conceptual limitations of (1) Cessation, (2) Creation, (3) Non-eternity, (4) Eternity, (5) Unity, (6) Multiplicity, (7) Coming, and (8) Going. This transcendental principle is called Shunyata by Nagarjuna, while Gauda Pada calls it as Advaita or Turiya Brahman. Nagarjuna renders homage to that illumined teacher (Sambuddha) who taught the middle course ; Gauda Pada too reveres his Guru in exactly the same words. Both are idealists Nagarjuna being a subjective idealist, Gauda Pada being an absolute idealist.

The element of idealism is common to Buddhistic and Vedantic thought. It may be noted that although Nagarjuna's allusion is directly to Gautama Buddha, Gauda Pada leaves us in doubt as to who that best man (*Dvipadamvaram*) is, although Dasgupta is inclined to believe that Gauda Pada refers to Gautama Buddha. The interpretation of Sankara and Anundajnana makes us believe that Gauda Pada refers to Narayana in the verse. But the words indicate that Gauda Pada refers to a *human* teacher and not to a *mythical* sage or god like Narayana. Most probably Gauda Pada refers to Suka Yogindra—his direct Guru and not to Narayana or Gautama Buddha.

Turning now to the second text, Nagarjuna's teaching and Gauda Pada's teaching are identical. Both regard the world as illusory or unreal like a dream or an illusory appearance of a City in Heavens. Gauda Pada here directly teaches Maya Vada and asserts that the Upanishad texts establish the same doctrine. Here lie the germs of Sankara's regular Maya Vada. In the third text we find the common teaching of Buddhism and that the essential or nominal nature cannot be converted into apparent or phenomenal nature. Reality and appearance, essence and form are not interchangeable. Both the thinkers agree that immortality cannot be established on a theory of transformation of substance.

In the fourth text the doctrine of Ajati Vada or non-creation of the world is propounded. The original principle cannot be turned into the world by its own inherent power or through the influence of any other element. In fact nothing is generated or produced but the underlying principle only appears in a variety of ways. This is the Buddhist Sunyata and Vedantic Vivarta.

In the fifth text we find similarity of thought but Nagarjuna expresses the principle by negation (Sunyata) while Gauda Pada expresses the same as assertion (Tatva). The difference in thought lies in the fundamental difference in the doctrine of Buddhism and Vedanta. The former is concerned with the *ethical* aspect of human activities and terminates in *Nirvana* or extinction of human sufferings while the latter is concerned with the *Metaphysical* aspect of human intellectual activities and consequently terminates in *Kaivalya* or residuum of pure consciousness. Buddhists do not hazard to express the nature of Nirvana beyond the extinction of mundane existence ; while the Vedantists go a step further and state that there is an ultramundane existence revealed

in a state of liberation. It will not be amiss here to state that great confusion has arisen on account of mis-interpretation of the word, Sunyata, of Nagarjuna. It is doing injustice to Nagarjuna to say that he taught Nihilism pure and simple, when he directly advocates Madhyamapartipad or middle consciousness as his goal. I should like to quote Nagarjuna's own words in support of my view : He says :

शून्यता सर्वं दृष्टीनां प्रोक्ता निःसरणंजिनैः ।

येषांतु शून्यता दृष्टिस्तानसाध्यान् बभाषिरे ॥ (XIII-8)

By "Sunyata" is meant by ethical veterans, a state in which variety of aspects disappears. But those whose view is turned into absolute vacuum are regarded as irremediable or incurable maniacs.

In the sixth text we have an identity of conception about the philosophical Knower.

In the seventh text we find the teaching of "middle path." Nagarjuna says that in the doctrine of Realism there is the perverse notion of eternity, while in the doctrine of Nihilism there is the extreme view of annihilation. A wise man should not resort to either extreme. Gauda Pada says that the Divine self is untouched by the notions of existence, non-existence, etc. He is the wise man who sees his self as devoid of these notions.

In the eighth text we gather the principle of relative and absolute truth, recognised both by Nagarjuna and Gauda Pada. The Samvrat Satya and Parmarth Satya have in post-Sankara Vedanta been known as Vyavahara Satya and Paramartha Satya.

Apart from the above identity in *thought* between the Buddhistic thinker Nagarjuna and Vedantic teacher Gauda Pada we have clear traces of Buddhistic terminology in Gauda Pada's Karikas used in support of Vedantic theory :—

कल्पितं न संवृत्तिसत्यं ; संबुद्धं ; आदिबुद्धं ; नायकं ; तायी ; अलातशांति ; धर्म (in the sense of living entity) अप्रधान (महायान) उच्छेद ; संघात ; अस्तिवस्तुत्ववादी (सर्वास्तिवादी) सोपलंभ, विज्ञान &c.

These words have the Buddhistic stamp on them and the word Buddha is used many a time in its direct reference to Gautama as well as to his followers. Sankara's interpretation of Buddha as *Brahmavid* implies the force of influence of his times.

(7) *Wherein does Vedanta differ from Buddhism ?*

In conclusion one point is to be specifically noted. Although Gauda Pada bases his doctrine on the Vedic texts of the Mandukya Upanishad as Agama, he does not hide the influence of Buddhism on his mind. He admits that there is affinity in thought between the teaching of the Buddha and the Vedantic doctrine so far as the phenomenality of the world is concerned, but in one fundamental point the Vedanta goes one step further, *viz.*, the noumenon of the world is pure consciousness :—

क्रमते नहि बुद्धस्य ज्ञाने धर्मेषु तायिनः ।

सर्वधर्मास्तथाज्ञानं नैतद् बुद्धेन भाषितम् (IV-99)

The similarity of Vedantic thought with Buddhistic thought thus lies in the denial of the Reality of the external world (*Bahyārtha Nirākaraṇa*) assertion of pure idealism (*Gṇanamāthra Kālpana*). But the independent ground work of the Vedānta lies in its Absolute Idealism (*Sthira Vijnāna Vada*) as opposed to subjective in his theory inasmuch as he has undertaken the task of interpreting his doctrine from direct Upanishad Texts which were historically prior to the birth of the Buddha. But there are subconscious admissions of the force of Buddhistic teachings when he refutes Buddhistic Vijnāna Vada.\* Anyhow the Vedantic teaching of Gauda Pāda of Buddhistic stamp impressed on the sub-conscious mind of Sankara could not be wiped off. Even a genius is the mind-born (*Manasa putra*) son of his time and Sankara was no exception to this truth. A genuine scholar of the Vedantic school should not take it as an insult that he has Buddhism in his intellectual texture just as a Modern University Graduate—however ultra-nationalist he may be—cannot disown the influence of English education.

ग्राह्यलक्षणसंयुक्तं न किञ्चिदिह विद्यते

विज्ञानपरिणामोऽयं तस्मात्सर्वः समीक्ष्यते

तेषामल्पापराधं तु दर्शनं यित्यतोक्तिः &c. तत्त्वसंग्रह. 329 330

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## NOTES OF THE MONTH

THE whole world is seething with discontent to-day. The leaders of thought attribute it to various fundamental causes. Some trace it to class supremacy and the consequent economical and social disharmony, and others to the unbalanced political conditions of the world. A wise man would find that the reasons for this discontent are not so much economical, social, or political as ethical and spiritual. Great misery is inflicted on man by man himself. The fundamental problem of the world to-day is, therefore, ethical and spiritual.

India has perhaps the largest share in this discontent. To-day India is not the India of the Hindus only. Although they form the main bulk of the population, there are so many other religionists who also call this land their own motherland. The problem of India can never be solved unless and until proper cognizance is taken of all its religions. It is for us to think and ponder over the problem "What should be the attitude of the Hindus towards other religions without their deviating from the main principles of Hinduism?" -

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Of all the religions of the world, if there is one that is sufficiently catholic and can hold in its bosom all the different aspects of the one infinite Truth, it is Hinduism. It satisfies all natures and temperaments. It affords the largest scope for reason, emotion, and volition. It is not in conflict with any other religion on the face of the earth. If it is properly understood and lived, it can express wonderful power of assimilation. The history of the absorption of Buddhism bears eloquent testimony to this.

It is often believed that Hinduism is proselytising, but it is not proselytising in the sense that other religions are. It is not aggressive like them. Swami Vivekananda compared it to the fall of gentle dew-drops, silent and unseen, but bringing into blossom the fairest of flowers. Everyone who comes into contact with it is fascinated by its beauties and conquered by its truths. Therefore it is that Sir Oliver Lodge has remarked that Hinduism has been exercising a wide influence over several peoples from ancient times. Many aborigines in

India and outside have been converted to Hinduism. And even to day the assimilation is going on. We are possibly certain that all the religions which have come into contact with Hinduism have been glorified by its touch. Mohammadanism, for instance, developed a great cult called Sufism as a result of the influence on it of Hinduism. In its nature, Sufism is not different from Hinduism or Vedanta. Even in Christianity, Vedantic thoughts are manifest, and the late Dr. James accepted in his book on Pragmatism that vedantic thoughts have entirely changed the view-points of Christianity. Schopenhauer paid a great tribute to the Vedanta philosophy by his celebrated saying, "There is no study more beneficial and elevating to mankind than the study of the Upanishads. It has been the solace of my life, and it will be the solace of my death." And Max Muller declares "If philosophy is meant to be a preparation for happy death or Euthanasia, I know of no better preparation for it than the Vedanta Philosophy," while Schopenhauer's first disciple, Paul Deussen, writes : "God, the sole author of all good in us, is not, as in the Old Testament, a Being contrasted with and distinct from us, but rather . . . . . our divine self. This and much more we may learn from the Upanishads : We shall learn the lesson if we are willing to put the finishing touch to the Christian consciousness, and to make it on all sides consistent and complete."

Even to day the thoughts of the Vedanta are a power in the world.

What we want to-day in India is to bring about a better understanding between the followers of different religions who are living in it, to make them all feel their unity and live accordingly. It is regrettable that the average Hindu boy or even an elderly Hindu is ignorant of the principles of his own religion. It is being identified by ninety percent of our people with certain kinds of social customs such as eating, drinking, or going to the temples. So far as the practical side is concerned, the average Hindu does not live the spiritual life. The voice of the Vedas speaks of the unity of life and of the unity of purpose. In our practical life we have split up the beauty of this unity of the Supreme Being into millions of shreds and that is why we have become either selfish or suicidal in our conduct. We do not bring into practice the great truths of Vedanta. If we really know

the truths of our religion, we cannot feel any difference between ourselves and other religionists.

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The principal religions that exist to-day are Christianity, Judaism, Mohammadanism, Zoroastrianism and Hinduism. It is absolutely certain that all the first four can be harmonised with the true spirit of the last which is based upon Vedanta. Zoroastrianism is nothing but an off-shoot of Vedanta and it can be proved that it has nothing but the doctrines of Buddhism and Hinduism. Again there is nothing in Christianity that we have not in our religion. Even in the personality of Christ there is nothing that we have not in the great teachers of our own land.

The crudities of other religions would disappear when they are compared with the religion of the Vedas. Mohammadanism will be understood better when it is studied side by side with Vedanta. But it is a pity that many Mohammadans shrink from a comparison. Somehow or other they have developed the idea that their religion is supreme. Somehow or other the idea has been kept up that their religion is beyond all comparison and this view has produced a feeling of fanaticism among certain sects. But fanaticism can be broken by working slowly with love and faith in the truths of our own religion. For सत्यमेव जयति नानृतम् Truth will conquer, and not untruth. The wisdom of the Vedas can never be falsified. We must take our stand on Truth and we are sure that Mohammadans can be reconciled with the Hindus and harmony brought about. There is a good deal of common culture between Hindus and Indian Mohammadans. The difference between them is not so marked as that between the Hindus and Arabic or Turkish Mohammadans. There are some peculiar traits of the Indian mind, and the Indian Mohammadans have not lost them as ninety per cent of them are converts. Their fore-fathers were Hindus and the Hindu blood is still in their veins. We have only to appeal to them and response will surely come.

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What is absolutely essential is that we should be first well established in our own faith and work with love. It is with love and faith that Mahatma Gandhi has achieved a remarkable degree of success in this respect. You must first believe yourself that there is only one life and this feeling will

work upon the minds of others and harmony will be restored. It is well known that great Hindu sages were approached by Mohammadans for the study and practice of religion. Kabir was acknowledged by both the communities as a man of God-realization and true Mohammadan saints were followed by the Hindus as well. So what is wanted is only the living of a truly spiritual life. The average Hindu is rather weak in his faith ; but even a low class Mohammadan sincerely believes that a ' Kafir ' can one day be converted into Mohammada-nism.

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In modern times, no nation can live all by itself. In ancient days we used to enjoy peace and plenty because there were no chances of onslaught. As the foreigners have begun to invade our motherland, we have to change our relationship with them. The Hindus have never gone out like other conquering nations because they know that their greatness lies not in robbing their neighbours and that the ideal of life is the development of character and the realization of the Self.

Though the Hindus did not go out for conquest of other lands they did go out in days of yore for conquest of the world by Indian thought. Even in the pre-Buddhistic period, the Brahmins went out to spread their culture and philosophy. Long before the dawn of Greek, Egyptian and Phoenician civilisations, India had begun to play a very important part in moulding the world-thought. In China the missionaries of India contributed not a little to the development of the ethical culture in Buddhistic times. Buddhist missionaries went out to Mexico, Africa and the whole of Asia, and spread the ethical culture of India.

If we Hindus can ever maintain our position to-day, we can do so only in one of two ways. At present our place is very low in the eyes of the outside world on account of our political disabilities. Many political leaders of our country view the Indian problem from a western stand-point. They think that the best course of development of national life is to follow in the footsteps of western nations and achieve freedom by western methods. If the west has come to conquer the east with all its brute force strengthened by science and all its national resources mobilised for the purpose of exploitation, we must either develop our brute power in order to withstand them, that is become bigger brutes to vanquish them ; or try to metamorphose them and deprive them of their brute

nature by raising them from man the brute into man the divine. No one who knows a little about modern India can ever hope to develop such organisations and put forth such concentrated energy towards the achievement of the goal as the westerners have done. We are absolutely lacking in unity of action and the power of organisation. How can we cope with the westerners possessing machine-guns and aeroplanes in the battle for life and freedom? It must be remembered that we have not developed the qualities of the west because it is not in our blood to become brutes. There is no doubt a slumber has come upon us, but not death. If the Hindus were to die, then, with them will die all that is great and noble in the world. If there is any country in the world to-day where a perfectly spiritual life can be lived, it is India. There lies the glory of our motherland in spite of decadence. Those who have left the Indian shores for other lands can bear testimony to this. India must therefore live and it has still a vision. To destroy our vision, to become brutes, to come down to the level of a marauder is not in our blood. We have several thousands of years behind our back. Our national *samskaras* cannot be changed all on a sudden, because they have become our second nature. So far as the outside world is concerned, our policy must be to metamorphose the brute in man with the spiritual force of our country.

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But, however, in spite of weaknesses and defects, the average westerner is most practical and lives his life most intensely. Whatever he may take up, he clings to it with dogged pertinacity. This is wanting in our country. We shirk our responsibilities. We have no grit, no steadfastness. We turn our faces away from any difficult path leading to the goal. Suppose one wants money. If somebody dies leaving a hoard, he will be glad to take it. This is the slothful attitude of an average Indian. We want somebody to do everything for us. But bear in mind that without exertion nothing can be achieved. It is through their wonderful energy that the westerners have brought their civilisation to its present condition. Even in the spiritual life for which they have little or no tendency, if you once win their hearts, you will find that they stick to their guns to the very last.

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It is often feared that it is impossible to change the mentality of the westerner. His mind is aggressive and

powerful, and if we are not strong and powerful ourselves, he will not appreciate us, though this is a fact that speaks well in his favour. But, however, by developing our *sattvic* nature it is possible to defeat his *rajasic* nature. Our conquest will not be of the body but of the mind and soul.

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For this, India must supply an army of great workers who are men of pure renunciation having no thought of their own interest and entirely dedicating themselves at the altar of our motherland. Supreme self-sacrifice is absolutely necessary. As a soldier goes out to battle on behalf of his motherland for the sake of its glory, we also must go out for the conquest of the world by spirituality. If we cannot sacrifice the little comforts of the homelife for the sake of our country, we are not worth the salvation we are hankering after. Our blood must boil with the ideal of self-abnegation. No half-hearted man can serve his country. We want men who are strong in determination, full of vigour, and of keen intellect. The great Emperor Asoka once raised an army of Bhikshus and sent them over to the different parts of the world. A similar army of noble souls should go to the west and revolutionise its thought. There is a great demand from outside our land for teachers of true religion—from America, Germany, France and other parts of Europe. The Hindu society should rise equal to the occasion by sending such teachers.

Tremendous power has to be conserved in ourselves and utilised for strengthening and invigorating our activity. Every one in our country should ask himself in this wise : " Am I not the descendant of the ancient Rishis ? Have I forgotten the glory of my religion ? I belong to such and such Gotra. But do I believe really in the blood of the Rishis that is in my veins and have I real love for my country ? " When the question of sacrifice comes many may hesitate. But they must fill themselves with love for their country and religion. When Swami Vivekananda was once the guest of an American millionaire, he was given a couch to lie on, which was so soft that even princes might envy. But when he was sitting on it, the picture of the dire poverty of his land came to his mind. He could not sleep on it and had to come down on the floor to enjoy peace. Such was his burning patriotism ! It is the duty of the young men to emulate his example of self-sacrifice.

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True democracy can have a basis only on the spiritual unity of life. If the democratic people of the west are convinced of this truth, they will be able to arrive at the solution of most of their complicated problems upon which depends the salvation of their own people as well as that of others. It is high time that the Hindus developed in them not merely a passive consciousness of their religion but a living dynamic faith.

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Swami Vivekananda preached what he called dynamic religion. It was he who made Hinduism alive to the needs of India and the world. He knew that India's line of action and path of salvation lie through that. The salvation of India is not political but can come only through dynamic religion which will spread our culture and spirituality and enable man to unfold to the best of his powers the divinity within him.

At the present day Indians go to the west as students or as beggars. A student can learn, but a beggar is always treated with contempt. Indians must have something to give before they go there. If we can teach the foreigners the life-giving truths of religion, we will be raising ourselves in their estimation. The sooner India follows this advice of Swami Vivekananda, the quicker will come the salvation of our motherland.



## NEWS AND REPORTS

### HINDU COLLEGE FOR BATTICALOA

A conference of the Hindus of Batticaloa District was held on Friday the 10th May at the Vivekananda Hall, Kalladi-Uppodai, to consider the educational needs of the Hindu community of the Batticaloa District. The meeting began with prayers and Mr. V. C. M. Aiya-durai was voted to the chair. Mr. N. Seenitamby was elected Secretary *pro tem*. The Chairman explained the object of the conference and called upon Swami Vipulananda to address the meeting. The Swami, in a short and lucid speech, explained the necessity of establishing at Batticaloa a first grade educational institution which would give as much attention to religious training as to secular instruction and which would afford its pupils all the facilities necessary for obtaining a good secondary education. The Swami's address was followed by other speeches and the Chairman in his closing remarks pointed out that it was fortunate for Batticaloa that the Swami, who is a graduate of the University of London, a reputed Tamil scholar and educationalist has offered his services to work for the promotion of education in his native land and that the Hindus would do well not to lose the present golden opportunity for supplying a long felt want of Batticaloa District. The conference resolved to establish at Kalladi a first grade Hindu College equipped with all modern requirements and having in its own grounds a shrine for worship, spacious dormitories, laboratories and playgrounds. It was also resolved to establish at Batticaloa a branch of the Sri Ramakrishna Mission. Two leading Hindu gentlemen of Kalladi-Uppodai : Messrs. N. K. Nallatamby and N. S. Selvadurai promised to donate twenty-five acres of land for the aforesaid educational purpose. An executive committee consisting of Srimath Swami Vipulananda (President), Mr. N. K. Nallatamby (Vice-President), Messrs. K. S. Chandrasekaram Pillai and Seenitamby (Joint Secretaries), and Messrs. M. Chenniah, T. Sangara Pillai, K. O. Velu Pillai, N. S. Selvadurai, S. O. Ratnasingam, K. Kanagasabey, P. Kanagasabey, N. M. Masilamany, S. W. Arambamoorthy and N. K. Kasipathi Pillai was formed to carry out the objects of the conference. An advisory board representative of the whole of the Batticaloa District was also formed. The meeting terminated with prayers.

#### VERNACULAR TITLE EXAMINATION.

*The Nikhil Bharat Sahitya Sangha, Sova Bazaar Street, Calcutta,* have issued a circular letter outlining a scheme of examinations in the Vernaculars. The promoters of the scheme explain the underlying object in the following words :—

“ The study of the different Indian Vernaculars is essentially necessary for the mutual understanding and appreciation of the different peoples of India with a view to the gradual spread of an uniform standard of culture and a common aim and aspiration of life. This purpose can best be attained by stimulating a healthy desire for studying the vernaculars, among the youth of the country. A system of

examination with prizes, medals and diplomas offered is calculated to help society materially in the attainment of its objects. For this purpose a special title examination will be held. The subjects of examination are :—Ramayan, Mahabharat, Ayurveda, Rajasthan, Original Composition, Story and Novel Writing, Four Vedas, Six Darshanas, Navya Nyaya, Astronomy, Bhagabat, Bhagabat-Gita, Mahanirvanatantra, Mahanumadan Literatures, Buddhist Literatures, Mental Healing, Jain Literature. Titles are :—Kavyanidhi, Puratawabhushan, Vidyabhushan, Tatwanidhi, Vidyavisharad, Nyayapisharad, Vedanta-Jainasiromani, Jainashastrapisharad, Vidyavinode, Imamu-Ulamail-Moyar-rikhin, Imamu-Ulamail-Muhaddichhin, Imamu-Ulamail-Mufaschherin-Koran, Vidyabhachaspati, Tantraratna, Yogavidyavisharad, Samkhyavisharad, Kaviratna, Ayurvedashastri, Saraswati, Bharati, etc. Students, teachers and any one whether male or female may appear in the examination at the same time from their respective houses without appearing in any particular centre. Four months' time will be given for answering the paper. (There are Thesis Examinations). Candidates are required to answer in any one of the following languages :—Sanskrit, Bengali, Hindi, Guzrati, Marathi, Gurumukhi, Sindhi, Telegu, Tamil, Canarese, Arabic Malayalam, Oriya, Urdu, Assamese, Maithili, Nepali, Pali, Burmese, Ceylonese, English. Successful candidates will be awarded rewards besides their title according to merits. The examination fee for every subject is Rs. 10 only. Honorary titles are also conferred on the authors, writers of weekly and monthly papers, Alopatic, Homeopathic and Ayurvedic Physicians, Artists and Songsters of examining their productions (Fee Rs. 50 only). All correspondence should be made in English.

For particulars apply to :—

*Jnanendra Kumar Kavyarnab, Vedantaratna, Secretary, "The Nikhil Bharat Sahitya Sangha," Sovabazaar Street, Calcutta.*  
with one anna stamp for postage.

The objects which the promoters have in view are indeed laudable. It is a pity that they have not indicated in the circular, the lines on which it is sought to attain a high standard of cultural unity in this country. Is it merely holding examinations and awarding titles and prizes? We wish the promoters will give us more details in order that we may give a considered opinion on the merits of the scheme.

**THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASRAM**—Charitable hospital and dispensary, Rangoon.

We have perused with great interest the report of the Sevasram for 1924. During the year under report, 75,241 patients, mostly of the poor and labouring classes of all religious denominations and nationalities, had medical treatment in the Asram; of these, 74,338 males 48,355, females 25,773 were attended to in the dispensary; the remaining 1,113 patients being housed and treated in the hospital. The year opened with a cash balance of Rs. 418-3-6; Rs. 14,922-12-9 were received by way of donations and Rs. 7,914-10-0 by subscriptions. The total receipts during

the year, including a loan receipt of Rs. 1,857 and the cash balance of 1923, was Rs. 25,274-14-3 of which Rs. 23,291-9-3 was expended leaving a balance of Rs. 1,983-5-0 at the end of the year. It is very gratifying to know that the relief afforded by the hospital to the deserving poor of all communities is much appreciated by the public. Sir Harcourt Butler, the Governor of Burma, who is the patron of the institution, has, after a visit to the hospital during the year recorded his high appreciation of the splendid work done by it. From the Visitors' Notes printed in the report, we are pleased to note a loving tribute to the work of the Ramakrishna Mission Hospital by a Christian Divine, Dr. Wm. H. Drummond. We make no apology for quoting his appreciation.—"It is a true home of the spirit of service, speaking the deep truths of universal religion not by words but by realising them in life. Many hospitals much more richly endowed may learn here that in the work of healing, love and faith and unfailing kindness must always have the chief place. It will be a great loss to Rangoon if any part of the hospital has to be closed for want of funds." We feel that such a good institution deserves to be better supported financially than it has been. It is labouring under some pressing inadequacies which require early removal. There is no properly equipped operation theatre or dressing room and it lacks clinical equipment, all due to its inadequate financial position, which we trust, will soon improve.

#### THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION HOME OF SERVICE, BENARES.

The twenty-fourth annual report of the institution for 1924, which we have just received, is a record of satisfactory progress all round. The ideal of service is the most predominant feature of the home and that service free and ungrudgingly to all who seek the shelter of the Home, without distinction of caste or religion. The hospital attached to the Home housed, during the year, 1,302 in-patients, while in the out-door dispensary, so many as 14,784 patients were treated. Besides providing medical aid, several people who were actually stranded in Benares were helped with the necessities of life without which timely help the consequences to them would have been disastrous.

The Home of Service has other lines of activity. For instance, there is a Home for male invalids who come to spend their last days in Benares but who through improvidence or the unforeseen circumstances are unable to meet their expenses. The Home provides food and shelter in really deserving cases. The Home provides a refuge for widows and female invalids, and acts as guardian to poor boys and girls of respectable families but without proper guardians or in constant danger of yielding to temptation. To save such boys and girls from being corrupted and to help them grow up as useful men or women they are carefully looked after in the Home. There is also a spinning and weaving department, conducted by expert workers, in which the inmates of the Home as well as outside boys are taught useful handicrafts. In these and other directions, the Home can justly claim to have given a good account of itself during the year. It is

gratifying to note that the public has helped the Home most generously. Every line of development in the public service means more and more money and we have no doubt that the splendid service rendered by the Home will evoke generous response from the charitably-minded public and we sincerely echo the hope expressed in the report that the current year will show better result in all directions.

**SRI SATCHIDANANDA SANGHA :—**The Sangha which was established in 1919 in memory of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, with the object of stimulating the study of Vedanta in its universal aspect and to cultivate the practices of Karma, Bhakthi, Yoga and Gnana among its members, has just issued its report for the year ending September, 1924, which affords interesting reading. The membership of the Sangha has increased during the year under report from 83 to 95. The finances of the Sangha also show an increase, the total receipts during the year under review, including the previous year's balance, amounting to Rs. 1,228-10-10, as against Rs. 853-15-7 for the last year. The expenditure during the year amounted to Rs. 607-11-4, leaving a balance of Rs. 615-15-6.

The weekly religious classes were well attended. A Conference of Religions was held for the second time at Madras during the Christmas of 1923, with the object of attaining the realisation of the ideal of harmony of religions. All the principal religions were represented at the Conference by their respective exponents. The Sangha deserves to be congratulated on the success of the Conference which provided a common platform on which a Hindu, a Muhammadan, a Christian, a Buddhist and a Parsi embraced one another as members of the great family of humanity, realising the unity underlying the diverse faiths in the world.

The Sangha is in need of a permanent habitation and it appeals to the generous public to help it to have a building of its own. We heartily commend the appeal of the Sangha for support.

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**FOREST MEDITATION AND OTHER POEMS**, by James H. Cousins. (Theosophical Publishing House, Madras, 1925).

A collection of delightful verses, artistic and of high quality as may be expected from a poet of Dr. Cousins' high standing and reputation in the literary world. The poems reveal that Dr. Cousins is a poet of nature. Common objects, the woodland, the stream and a hundred other things of the countryside have a fascination for him. "I sing of waters, winds and trees—Ah no! I do not sing of these"; but "the Spirit mixed in mortal things. She sings no passing wind or tree; She sings their haunting mystery." That is the theme of the poems. He sees God in the nature around us :

"Man (in God's image) grovelling goes  
After dull earthy ends,  
While delicately on a rose  
A shining beetle feeds."

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

“ Let the lion of Vedanta roar.”

“ Let me tell you, strength, strength is what we want  
And the first step in getting strength is to uphold  
The Upanishads and believe that ‘ I am the Atman.’ ”

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

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## A PRAYER

जपो जल्पः शिल्पं सकलमपि मुद्राविरचनं ।  
गतिः प्रादक्षिण्यं भ्रमणमदनाद्याहुतविधिः ॥  
प्रणामः संवेशः सुखमखिलमात्मार्षणदशा ।  
सपर्यापर्यायस्तव भवतु यन्मे विलसितम् ॥

**O**H Mother, may all my speech, howsoever idle, be recitation of Mantra (Japa) ; may all the actions with my hand be the making of ritual gesture (Mudra) ; may all my walking be the pacing around (Thy image in worship) ; may all my eating and other functions be Homa rites ; may my act of sleeping be prostration before Thee ; may all my pleasures be an offering to the great Self. Whatsoever I do, may it be counted for the worship of Thee.

—ANANDA LAHARI BY SANKARACHARYA

## EDITORIAL NOTES

**T**HERE is a general belief, not only in India but also outside, that religion consists in quietude and passivity of meditation. Some foreigners, especially the Christian missionaries, maintain that Christianity holds a higher doctrine than Hinduism, inasmuch as the former sets forth the ideal of a dynamic life, whereas Hinduism, in their opinion, preaches quietude and inactivity.

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But nothing can be farther from the truth. No doubt the Hindus believe that the highest state of spiritual realization is one in which the consciousness of the cosmic process of the relative aspects of life is completely obliterated and which becomes manifest in the Absolute. In fact the infinity of the Divine Being is not the infinity of the aggregate of small parts of the universe, but the transcendental infinity which is beyond the play of time, space and causation. It is very difficult for the ordinary human mind to understand such a state, because mind works through time, space, and causation, and therefore cannot comprehend what is beyond them. Mind cannot jump out of itself. As it is constituted, it cannot therefore comprehend the infinity of God, and when it tries to do so, it understands it as the sum-total of the whole universe which in Sanskrit is called the *Virat Purusha*. There are very many logical theologians who do not accept God as the *Virat Purusha*. Therefore we have to accept, in consistency with logic as well as the experience of spiritual seers, that there is a state which is transcendental—beyond the limitations of the senses and mind. This is the real infinity of God and is what we call the *Para Brahman*. When man realises It, all activities of the relative existence will entirely vanish and we believe that that state is the highest to which man can aspire. Quietude or passivity does not connote the real state of the Supreme Being. The state of the Supreme Being is neither passive nor active, *Brahman* being the term applied to the substratum of all activity as well as all passivity.

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But the average man understands God as a Personal Being having the attributes of Omniscience, Omnipresence and

Omnipotence. If he is endowed with a slight metaphysical insight, he conceives of God as an Immanent Principle pervading the entire universe, that is, as the *Antaryamin* residing in every heart. When God is conceived of as a Personal Being, He is the creator, preserver, and destroyer. The ordinary human intellect can go so far, and this conception of God as the *Virat Purusha* which is the sum-total of the entire creation is quite natural to it. This universe is His body. Every minute *Jiva* or individual soul beginning from the smallest insect upto the highest and most developed man forms but a part of that great *Virat Purusha*. He is the Supreme God in whom we live and move and have our being. He is the Principle of Consciousness behind both quietude and intense activity. The Upanishads describe Him as such.

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Modern science tells us that there is not a single atom in the universe which is not moving. Whatever you perceive with your senses, whatever has been created, is the outcome of the vibration of the supreme vital energy. In fact, *Srishti* itself means this motion. Hence, if we view from the standpoint of the individual atoms, every one of them is intensely active. If the energy in every atom be liberated, this earth will be destroyed in no time. But if we view from the standpoint of the aggregate, we find that there is no motion. We see so many things around us as stationary but the atoms and molecules in them are in perpetual motion. A fruit falls from a tree to the earth : we perceive the fall because the motion of one thing can be perceived with reference to another. But the earth itself doesn't fall, for where can it fall ?

So also from the standpoint of Infinity, there is no activity. But from the standpoint of the individual, there is intense activity. This is a scientific truth and Vedanta also declares it. It is absurd to say that life is all activity, and equally absurd to say it is all passivity. Life is a harmony of activity and passivity, an equilibrium between these two.

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Molecules combine with molecules, atoms with atoms, and electrons with electrons. Whence comes the power for the atoms to combine with the atoms ? It is the outcome of the energy of God ; as Sri Bhagawan puts it :

सर्वयोनिषु कौन्तेय मूर्तयः सम्भवन्ति याः ।

तासां ब्रह्म मह्योनिरहं बीजं प्रदः पिता ॥

“ Whatever forms are produced, O son of Kunti, in all the wombs, the Great Prakriti is their womb, I the seed-giving Father. ”

This universe is the expression of His power and His glory. Science has completely proved that it is the same energy that expresses itself in various forms. There is no difference between an atom, a man, this earth, the sun, the moon and the stars. God is creating, preserving and destroying. In course of time, every object disintegrates by the working of that same energy that has brought it into being. So the cosmic energy is incessantly working. Sri Krishna says :

न मे पार्थास्ति कर्तव्यं त्रिषु लोकेषु किञ्चन ।

नान्बासव्यवाप्तव्यं वर्त एव च कर्मणि ॥

“ I have, O Son of Pritha, no duty, nothing that I have not gained, and nothing that I have to gain, in the three worlds ; yet, I continue in action. ”

He is like the centre of a circle which is revolving. When we go from the centre towards the circumference, the motion becomes greater, the highest expression of motion being at the circumference. When we go from the circumference to the centre, less and less becomes the motion and in the geometrical centre there is perfect rest.

The life of a religious man is a wonderful harmony between activity and passivity. It is absurd to say that man must incessantly work and equally foolish to say that he should entirely abstain from action. It is because the Christian missionaries do not know the secret of work that they believe Hinduism to uphold the doctrine of passivity. Life being movement, there is nothing in the universe which is perfectly inactive ; because, even considering from the standpoint of physical activity, inactivity means death. The activity of man in his body is demonstrated not only by its voluntary expressions but also by the involuntary expressions such as the circulation of the blood and the beating of the heart. When these stop, man dies.

Though activity means life, it has to be so manipulated and employed as to enable us to live in an efficient way. We have a certain amount of energy. If we want to perfect our life, that is, to realise its ideal, the best way is to manipulate and utilise our energy to the best advantage and in the most fitting way. This is exactly what is meant by Karma Yoga or the philosophy of work :

बुद्धियुक्तो जहातीह उमे सुकृत दुष्कृते ।

तस्माद्योगाय युज्यस्व योगः कर्मसु कौशलम् ॥

“Endued with this evenness of mind, one frees oneself in this life alike from vice and virtue. Devote thyself therefore to this Yoga. Yoga is the very dexterity of work.” By this Karma Yoga we can produce the best and highest results with the least exertion, and without any frittering away of energy. Scientists tell us that when a light burns, a large percentage of the materials that are utilised in producing it is wasted, and only a small portion expresses itself in the form of light. The best method of producing the light is by minimising the wastage so that maximum available energy may be converted into light. Similarly we possess a certain amount of energy physical and mental, and the best way of utilising it is to attain the maximum results with its help.

All the desires of our life can be summed up in these three words—infinite existence, infinite wisdom, and infinite bliss, and we are all working directly or indirectly, consciously or unconsciously, to fulfill them. However selfish may be the activities of a man, their motive power is his inner desire for infinite happiness, and the man who works in an adequate way gets a large proportion of it. The ordinary man lives in the physical world ; and the physical life and material knowledge and bliss become his goal. As we evolve and develop, our desires and enjoyments cease to be purely physical. The savage finds great pleasure in food or physical beauty. But a scientist or a mathematician, with a passion for intellectual knowledge, forgets himself and feels absorbed in his subject. The higher we evolve, the higher becomes our conception of happiness. Our progress towards the real goal of life will depend upon our making a conscious effort to reach it.

Every small insect or tiny creature is attempting to reach the state of infinite bliss. Every man, whatever be his country, race or religion, is propelled to move towards it by an inner urge divine. Life involves an adjustment between internal and external principles. Our life is determined by a constant struggle between the two. If the inner dominates over the external, we say life is evolving, and the reverse is retrogression.

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The more we understand the secret of the struggle and the proper manipulation of energy, the greater will be our evolution. We can know we are really evolving, not by our acquiring creature comforts nor by gaining any other objects, but by the elevation and purification of our inner life.

Modern western civilisation, in spite of great scientific culture, is not really worth the name. Have the people of the West progressed in life? No, their mind is restless. They have discovered a few secrets of external nature, but they have no control over their minds or internal nature. Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna once remarked: "Napoleon could conquer the whole world, but he could not conquer his own mind!" It requires no great manifestation of physical and mental power in order to dominate over others. In the last war, the belligerents fought with each other like beasts. They are very little removed from the old savages. Swami Vivekananda remarked: "The average European is the same old Roman with the same Roman brutality in his veins." We see what an amount of discontent reigns in the hearts of Westerners.

Many experiments are being made for the securing of peace in the Western world: but they have proved a failure so far, because there is no stability inside, and stability is sought for outside. The external world is a whirlpool of change. The whole social structure in the West is built on shifting sand. There the people are still groping in the dark. They have only acquired power over the outside world.

And what amount of progress have we made in our own country? Our religion has become more or less a matter of conformity with certain general customs—*Desacharas* and *Lokacharas*. Every province in India has its own customs

and a man is expected to follow them in the name of religion, of which the spirit has been almost choked under them.

The West is madly active and in the midst of her action, her hurry and flurry, she loses all inner calmness, and her whole energy is utilised to attain worldly prosperity and pleasures. Many Westerners often bring their nerves to such a pitch of strenuous and unceasing activity, and give so little respite to their mind that they find themselves unable to bear the resultant strain and even become lunatics. Peace of mind and serenity of soul are sacrificed at the altar of work and worldly happiness. In the East, in India, most of the people have taken to a life of drifting. As circumstances favour, we work a little for some time to satisfy the wants of our families, and spend the rest of our lives in passivity. If the West is too *Rajasic*, the East is too *Tamasic*. The real path lies between activity and passivity :

कर्मण्यकर्मयः पश्येदकर्मणि च कर्मयः ।

सबुद्धिमान्मनुष्येषु सयुक्तः कृत्स्नकर्मकृत् ॥

“ He who sees inaction in action, and action in inaction, he is intelligent among men, he is a yogi, and a doer of all action. ”

If, in the midst of a crowd in the busiest city in the world, you can feel as calm and peaceful as when placed in the midst of a solitary desert, you have become master of yourself; but even if you live in the solitude of the Himalayan caves and yet have no control over your mind, you are worse than the worst of slaves. Sri Krishna was the highest embodiment of this beautiful harmony between activity and serenity. Though placed in the midst of one of the greatest of battles ever fought, he soared so high to philosophical altitudes and spiritual eminences as to give out the great truths which have come to us through the *Gita*. Leaving aside the idea of His being a divine incarnation, and taking Him to be merely a free *Jiva*, one has to admit that He certainly deserves our highest veneration. If India is to rise and if the West is to preserve herself, it is by the emulation and worship of the ideal of Sri Krishna—the ideal of combination of yoga and action, of profound meditation and intense activity. Sri Krishna was intensely active and yet the very centre of calm and repose.

We should never yield for a moment to our passions and desires but pay the dear price of constant wakefulness for buying our freedom. Never for a moment should we hanker after the fruits of our work, or for individual or communal enjoyment. Even the highest patriotism or the deepest love for one's own country has to be sacrificed at the altar of spiritual freedom. For, even if we undergo physical torture or are willing to throw ourselves into the mouth of the roaring canon, there is a tinge of selfishness, attenuated though it be, which can bring about the reaction of misery. When a man feels within himself, "I am working for *my* nation, *my* country," he upholds a nationalism which is selfish like his love for his own family and sows the seed of that aggressive type of nationalism which is rooted in narrow individualism. The difference is only one of degree and not of kind. The real goal of life is forgotten, because selfishness is limitation and the individualisation of the ideal, and every individualisation is a negation of the ideal which is infinite bliss. But Karma Yoga requires us to do work without aspiring for the fruits thereof. One who desires for the fruits of action is a *kripana*, i. e., one who is a slave to desires. And how can a slave expect eternal life which is not physical freedom but mental freedom from passions and desires, which comes from transcending our own little self. Our little self has to be sacrificed at the altar of the Universal Self ; we cannot forget our little self otherwise. This is why unselfishness is considered to be the finest fruit of spiritual life. Men like Buddha who can feel for even the little helpless crawling worm are perfect, because they have become one with the Universal Self. The philosophy of action or Karma Yoga tells us that every action of ours should be so done that it helps us in progressing towards the universal life. Who can give up desires? Only those who have mastery over their mind and keep it in perfect equanimity.

The word "Yoga" is used in different senses. Yoga or communion with God is possible through Karma, Jnana, and Bhakti. To an average unsophisticated Hindu or non-Hindu mind, "Yoga" sounds as something supernatural, mysterious, and extraordinary. But Bhagawan Sri Krishna distinctly says in the Gita that every one can be a Yogi, and Yoga should

be the ideal of a Brahmacharin, a Grihastha, a Vanaprastha, or a Sannyasin. This was the ideal in ancient India.

If we can keep our mind in perfect serenity in the midst of pleasure or pain, good or evil, we can be Yogis. Nothing of the physical or mental torture, which is often associated by some persons with Yoga and its practice, is required to make us Yogis. If we can keep our mind in a balanced state, in perfect repose and calm, whatever be the circumstances under which we may be placed, if we can avoid elation of mind in success or depression in failure, we are Yogis, and have discovered the truth of life and attained the peace of soul which is the goal of all religions. Every one of us should cherish and practise the ideal of yoga, no matter whether we are a clerk, a merchant, a king, a patriot, or a Sannyasin, whether we are in the midst of a solitary Sahara or a busy city thronging with crowds of men. We must keep the mind perfectly tranquil in the midst of any kind of activity. We must discharge all our duties to the best of our power, and at the same time have the consciousness that all manifestations of energy come from God, and all our energy is a part of the cosmic energy or belongs to the Almighty. Whether we are a coolly removing basketfuls of mud and filth on yon road or a king commanding and ruling millions of subjects from his peacock throne, we must consecrate our life, our all, to Him who is the mover of this universe, and feel and know that all work is His and none else's. Should we take for ourselves the glory of our life and deeds, we will suffer. Had it been ours, how could we have fall or failure, disease or death? Do we desire for these? Is the energy that in its working keeps us awake for some time and asleep at other times, ours? Have we control over all our voluntary and involuntary activities? No. He breathing, the world lives; He working, the world moves; He existing, the world has its being. The energy therefore is not ours; it is the cosmic energy for which we are but so many conduits or channels to flow through to its Eternal Abode. Gloria in excelsis! All glory unto God! Unto none else, unto none else! Real *Saranagathi* or self-surrender to the Supreme Being is to say and feel "not I, not I, O God! but Thou, but Thou!" When we have such perfect self-surrender, His energy will flow fully through us. This is the real significance of *soul force*. It is Divine Energy that is

ruling so many myriads, not only of men, but also of planets and heavenly systems, and keeps perfect order, and It can have an easy unobstructed channel for It to flow through in a free and pure man. Such a man is a Yogi. The true meaning of Yoga consists in feeling our own littleness and the supreme grandeur of the Universal Being in whom we live, move, and have our being. And when the Divine Energy flows through us, we will have perfect peace and repose of mind, and become so many living and moving gods upon earth, though we may be intensely active. May God the source of all life and energy, enable us all to realise that state of illumination in this very life !

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## PESSIMISM AND LIFE'S IDEAL : THE HINDU OUT-LOOK AND A CHALLENGE

(*With a criticism of Life and an interpretation of History*)\*

PRINCIPAL KAMAKHYA NATH MITRA, M. A.,

*Rajendra College, Faridpur, Bengal.*

THE word "Pessimism" comes from the Latin "Pessimus" which in English means "worst." According to the New English Dictionary, it was first used by Coleridge in one of his letters in 1794. The exact opposite of "Pessimism" is "Optimism" derived from the Latin "Optimus" which in English means "best". These two words are now on everybody's lips and under the influence of Western thought, we have arrived at the belief that Pessimism is bad philosophy, because it stands in the way of individual and national advancement, whereas Optimism is good as it is conducive to progress. Nor can we blame this view, for the word Pessimism is generally used in a condemnatory sense and its association, according to most Western writers, is on the whole with Atheism, for if Providence is beneficent and if teleological proof is at all a proof of the existence of God, then we cannot help characterising Pessimism as rank Atheism, though the fact remains that Pessimism is not necessarily atheistic any more than Optimism is theistic.

The religious and philosophical systems of India are called pessimistic by many Western scholars.—Max Muller, it seems, has not used the term in a bad sense—for the simple reason that the fundamental principle of all these systems is that life is full of misery and the world, therefore, essentially an evil. That we have sunk so low in the scale of nations appears now to most of us to be due to our philosophy and religion and we have also come to entertain the belief that the so-called progress of the West is due to the fact that the Westerners think that life is worth living and *joie de vivre* is the basis of their existence and therefore their philosophy is preferable to ours. There are Western writers who hold that

\*This is the author's own amplified English version of his Bengali article in the *Bharat-varsha* of Calcutta, Aswin, B. S. 1331. This will be continued in a few of the future issues.

the religion of our *Rig Veda* was healthy and optimistic, that the decline of this religion is ascribable to the doctrine of *Maya* that has made its way into the *Upanishads* or the *Jnana-kanda* of the *Vedas* and that it is in Buddhism that the religion of India has reached its nadir of decadence, for the pessimism met with here is of the gloomiest description.

There is another thing noticeable in this connection. The Westerners are generally of opinion that Pessimism is enervating and is the philosophy of weakness, whereas Optimism is a robust creed. According to the famous psychologist, the late Professor William James, this opinion is false. He has called the pessimists 'tough-minded,' and 'tender-minded' is the epithet he has applied to the optimists. Still the general opinion is opposed to that of James. As for Indian Pessimism, the prevailing Western view finds one of its latest and most characteristic expressions in Hastings' *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*. According to the author of the article on the subject in that monumental work, the Pessimism of India in spite of a certain philosophic basis is mainly environmental and temperamental in its origin and its baneful effect has been partly neutralised by the Bhakti-cult of the *Vaishnavas*, partly by the happy state of things, economic and political, brought about by the British Government established in the country and partly by the theistic movements initiated by the Brahmo Samaj and the Arya Samaj in the British period of our history. This categorical and confident assertion fairly takes our breath away.

There is another term we come across which is very recent in its origin and stands half-way between Optimism on the one hand and Pessimism on the other. This term is Meliorism. It was coined and first used by George Eliot, the novelist. Frederic Harrison, the friend of George Eliot and disciple of Comte called himself a Meliorist and the American philosopher, William James, also applied the term to himself. Now-a-days Meliorism seems to be the prevailing fashion in the philosophy of the West and the melioristic out-look and world-view appear to be most popular. The fact is, the out-and-out optimism of Leibnitz and the eighteenth-century Deists which is opposed to the stern realities of life and leads to self-complacency and selfish ease is quite untenable. The 'optimistic sonhistries of comfortable moles' cannot bear a moment's scrutiny. Schopenhauer is still unpopular, but

whatever flaw there may be in his Metaphysic, the arguments he has advanced to prove the essential evil and misery of the world are irrefragable. Even Eucken, the living philosopher of activism, admits that Schopenhauer convinces. The will to live, as ordinarily understood, must be eliminated altogether to make a higher life possible. The thoughtful men of the West now understand that optimism is a shallow affair and is the outcome of thoughtlessness or theological prejudice or both combined. But prejudice dies hard and this prejudice being also to a large extent due to the material prosperity of the Western world and hope of greater prosperity still, it is very difficult for even the best minds of the West to shake off its influence altogether. There is also the lurking fear of being called weak, should they declare in favour of pessimism, and thus we see that they have come to occupy the half-way house of Meliorism, the result of a compromise between optimism and pessimism. They admit the existence of evil in the world ; they have the fairness not to ignore or explain away the problem of evil which has proved disastrous to so many systems, but they hold that the world is improving and human happiness increasing. They also believe that misery will go on declining and happiness increasing *ad infinitum* and it should be the aim of our life to increase the measure of happiness and reduce evil as far as possible, though it is not quite clear why, if happiness spontaneously increases as 'Topsy 'grewed,' we should put forth any effort at all to bring it about. They all believe in infinite forward rectilinear movement though they admit that there are occasional set-backs which, however, according to them, need not be seriously taken into account. According to all of them the imperfect world is becoming perfect and according to some the imperfect God is also getting perfect, for God is eternally realising himself. Even God is not above the law of mighty evolution—a very unedifying spectacle indeed ! I do not remember to have seen the term Meliorist applied to Hegel on the one hand and Bergson on the other, but if we carefully examine their attitude towards life we cannot avoid the conclusion that both of them are meliorists in fact, their conflicting systems notwithstanding, for the doctrine of development is the distinctive feature of their philosophic systems, whatever their interpretation may be of development itself. As for the poet Browning, we are bound to call him a meliorist, for he really believes that the imperfect

man is getting perfect and so is the imperfect God. Then when we come to the evolutionists of the scientific world, the general trend of their belief in infinite rectilinear or forward movement strikes us as most pronounced, though, as I shall show later on, evolution supports no such conclusion. It will not be too much to say that the modern theistic and anti-theistic thinkers alike have been primarily influenced by the scientific evolutionists in their world-view and attitude towards life. Modern Christian theology has accepted from them the belief in the infinite possibility of the world's development and human progress and the theists of the Brahma Samaj of Bengal have followed suit, for they talk of the infinite progress of the soul contrary to the Hindu conception of *atman*, non-dualistic or dualistic.

When it is suggested by Europeans and Americans that our religion and philosophy are pessimistic—the latest suggestion is to be found in Lord Ronaldshay's "India—a Bird's-Eye View," a book which has been eulogistically noticed in all the leading periodicals of England—and that is why as a nation we have fallen so low, then cannot we promptly retort by saying : " Well, how about the religion which you profess ? We do not see anything but pessimism there. How do you characterise the Book of Ecclesiastes in the Old Testament and does not Jesus say in the New Testament that this world is a vale of sorrow which you must forego to follow him ? Does not he predict the impending dissolution of the world and does not he consign the wicked to the roaring fire of Eternal Hell ? Is not the burden of Thomas-a-Kempis' Imitation of Christ Vanity of Vanities—all is vanity and is it not a fact that Mediaeval Europe was dotted all over with monasteries and nunneries to realise the ideal lived up to and preached by Jesus ?"

The Christians will have to say in reply that all this is true, no doubt, that Christ was undoubtedly the Man of Sorrow, but the most important message of Christ is that of salvation and heaven. Salvation, be it noted, is not the same thing as our *Mukti*. It means life in Heaven for the chosen few by the grace of Jesus after the crack of doom. This is Christian eschatology. Till the Judgment-day every one must lie in the darkness of the grave and who is to be saved is a matter of considerable uncertainty. " The Kingdom of God is within you " is perhaps the most important message of

Christ, but there is very little of this teaching in the Church-Christianity of the West.

Here an objection may be raised by the modern Christians of the Protestant Church. They claim that the correct interpretation of Christianity is that which they have put on the Bible. The depression and gloom of Mediævalism, they say, they have shaken off completely. The exegesis of their theology they claim to be beautifully optimistic ; for absolute renunciation, monastic life and ascetic ideal have no place in their scheme and they go even so far as to say that asceticism or absolute chastity with absolute poverty is an imperfect, perverse, selfish and erroneous ideal of life. It is evident that the current Protestant Christianity is the result of a compromise with Science and Evolution on the one hand and Hegelian philosophy on the other. The latest compromise I am aware of is that with the philosophy of charge and *elan vital* of Henri Bergson attempted by L. H. Miller in his book "Bergson and Religion" published in 1916. Neither Hegelian reason nor Bergsonian intuition supports the ascetic ideal of life though Christ like an Indian *Sannyasin* was an ascetic of ascetics. With what other philosophy Christianity will have yet to come to terms is in the womb of the future, but that it has come to a very sad pass goes without saying.

If it be said that Christianity cannot be called a pessimistic religion because it holds out the hope of salvation and heaven, then cannot we also at the same time say that no more is our religion pessimistic ? For, the *summum bonum* of our life is the total extinction of sorrow (*atyantink 'dukha-nivritti*) or the endless bliss variously called *Moksha*, *Nirvana*, *Kaibalya* and *Apabarga* and this is a much higher and far more cheerful conception than the Christian idea of salvation, because *Mukti* is not meant for the few arbitrarily chosen but it is open to all *now and here* who, through Free will, will achieve perfect mastery over themselves, since a man's *Karma* is his alone and *Karma* is not inexorable Destiny. As for Heaven and Hell, a true Hindu renounces them both.

I do not propose to say anything in this paper about a hereafter or the life after death, for my subject is Pessimism and Pessimism is not an eschatological question but a view of the life lived on earth by the natural man. An optimist says that everything is best in this best possible world and the

will to live is therefore good ; whereas the Pessimist says that it is a very bad world, being based as it is on the will to live arising from desire (*basana*) which must be quelled, for all desire except that for liberation from the tyranny of the flesh and that for spiritual wisdom leads to nothing but bitter misery. The so-called joys of life are all fleeting—they are a delusion and a snare. Joys and sorrows follow each other in endless succession. They form a vicious circle we must get out of. How it is and how we have got into it we do not know, says the Hindu, but we do know how to get out of it. The Meliorist says that the world may not be the best possible world but it is not so bad after all and there is no harm in regulated desire and moderate enjoyment, for the world is becoming better and happier day after day. But if we ask him what he means by moderate enjoyment he will not be able to give a satisfactory answer, for what is moderate for one is not moderate for all.

The Christian explanation of life and the world may not be consistent with reason but so far as attitude towards life is concerned there is no difference between Hinduism and Christianity. They are equally pessimistic and pessimism leads to total renunciation which is the goal of Hinduism and Christianity alike. When, therefore, the current Protestant Christian theology, seeking support now from Hegel, Science and Evolution and then again from the philosophy of change and vital impulse of Bergson and indulging in melioristic hope and aspiration, deprecates the ideal of asceticism and attempts to reconcile "the world, the flesh and the devil" with the kingdom of Heaven of Christ, all that we can say is that it is not the Christianity of the Bible but a tissue of sophistries deliberately designed to suit a foregone conclusion. Nietzscheism is more honest than this sort of Christianity. If you are frank you will have to say with Swami Vivekananda, a keen observer of men and manners, that Europe became Protestant and shook off Christianity itself. If the Catholic dogma is unacceptable, reject it by all means but why reject the soul of Christianity, the only true ideal of life ?

KAMAKHYA NATH MITRA

(To be continued)

## COSMOLOGY\*

SWAMI PRABHAVANANDA

**I**N the first place, you must try to forget your old theological doctrines and to follow more in the footsteps of modern science. You will find, as I proceed, that the theories of Vedanta are confirmed by the truths arrived at by modern science and, wherever there is any anomaly, you will notice it is the modern science that errs and not the wisdom of the sages and philosophers of India.

First : Know that something cannot come out of nothing. For every effect there must be a cause, and the effect is but a reproduction of the cause. The whole of the effect must be in the cause in a potential form, as in the case of the tree. The tree is the effect of the seed. The whole of the tree must be in the seed to come out as a tree. There can be no developed substance which was not previously in the cause.

Then, again, there is no such thing as destruction. What is destruction ? Destruction is going back to the primary cause. As, for example, an earthen vessel, when it is destroyed, goes back to its cause—the earth. Therefore, there can be no beginning. There is the eternal chain of cause and effect—the seed coming out of the tree and the tree coming out of the seed and again going back to the seed. This is going on cyclically and periodically with this universe as a whole. We say the universe is destroyed when it goes back to its primary cause, and that there is the beginning of creation when from that cause the universe again comes out ; so there we affirm what is really the beginning of a cycle ; and thus it is going on, cyclically and periodically.

Now, again, there are two views on this point. One is that the whole universe goes back to its cause at one period of time. That there comes a time when the entire cosmos returns to its primal cause, and that is what is known as the dissolution of the universe. The other view is that the universe as a whole does not go back to its cause at the same period of time, that a part of the universe, say this solar system of ours, may go back to its cause, may be dissolved, but other systems may be existent ; that when the solar system goes

\*Notes of a class talk at the Hindu Temple, San Francisco, U. S. A.

back to the cause there may be projected other systems. Professor Huxley speaks truly in his *Evolution and Ethics* of the manifestation of cosmic energy alternating between phases of potentiality (dissolution) and phases of explication (creation). "It may be," he says, "as Kant suggests—every cosmic magma predestined to evolve into a new world has been the no less predestined end of a vanished predecessor." This idea is also found in the Vedantic doctrine, when it says that there is no such thing as an absolutely first creation ; the present universe is but one of a series of worlds which are past and of worlds which are yet to be.

Modern scientific research shows that the primal substance of this universe is not what has been known as scientific matter—that is, that which has mass, weight and inertia. Matter has been dematerialized, as it were, and reduced to something which is different from what is commonly known to us as matter—that which is perceived through our senses ; and that substance is stated to be the ether in a state of constant motion. Now, Indian thought agrees with Western scientific speculation when it says that matter does not really (that is permanently) exist, but that there are certain forces which combine and recombine, producing the appearance of matter (what we sense and perceive), and that this matter is ultimately reducible to what is called ether. But it differs from modern science when the latter says that that ether is the ultimate substance. According to Indian thought, it may be the secondary or tertiary state, but ether is not the primordial substance itself. You must remember that at this point science has gone beyond its proper scope and method and has trespassed upon metaphysics when it theorises to the effect that the ultimate substance is the ether which in turn is made up of electrons. At this point, science has really entered into metaphysical speculation and we must examine this from the metaphysical standpoint. It says that ether is made up of electrons. Now, there are these air electrons floating in the ether and the ether is composed of these electrons, but the difficulty arises here—what fills the space between two electrons ? If you say there is some still finer substance which fills up the interspace, the same question reappears, and then we fall into the logical fallacy of *regressus ad infinitum*—we do not arrive at any conclusion whatsoever. So, Indian thought recognises that there must be a primordial substance—the first cause from

which everything has come—molecules, electrons, atoms, force, thought, mind, intellect, gross matter and all their combinations. (It is startling to find the Indian sages declaring ages ago that mind is a subtle form of what is known to us as matter. And this is exactly what modern science is trying to prove—that mind is as much a product of the same substance as the body). There must be a primordial substance from which everything has come out and this substance is known to us as Nature (*Prakriti*) but the more scientific term for it is *Avyakrita* (undifferentiated Nature), the nature of which is described as the equilibrium of three forces : *Tamas*—attraction, *Rajas*—repulsion, and *Sattwa*—the balance of these two. Now, these three forces compose the primal substance—the *Avyakrita*, or the undifferentiated Nature ; and when these three forces are in equilibrium, there is no creation, no projection, no manifestation. (*Manifestation* would be the more philosophical term, not creation. A tree is not *created* from the seed but *manifested* from the seed). So, when there is this equilibrium, there is that undifferentiated mass—no manifestation, no projection. Then, when the balance of these three forces is disturbed, there is manifestation—the whole universe is evolved. The first manifestation is said to be the *Mahat*, or universal intelligence. Now, we have a mistaken idea of what intelligence is. We associate it with Spirit. But here the universal intelligence that is spoken of is not the Spirit. The Spirit is *Intelligence itself* and not what we see manifested in this universe. The thought or intelligence that is manifested in and through us is not *Intelligence itself*, because it is always associated with the brain and that we can understand as being something gross.

The manifestation after universal intelligence is the universal egoism. Universal egoism again splits itself into two varieties : the sense organs and the *tanmatras* (which really can be translated as “thatness.”) European philosophers have translated the word as “the generals of the particulars”. The idea is, we cannot perceive through our senses these *tanmatras*, but it is through and because of them, perception is possible. There is the flower. The flower has to come in contact in some manner with the sense of smell before we can smell it. Now, what comes in contact with the sense of smell is the *tanmatra* (thatness) of the flower. These *tanmatras* are five—touch, smell, taste, sight and hearing (the



finer materials of the gross) ; and these again are the five forces, which combine and recombine in different ways and produce this gross universe perceived through our senses ; and through the five senses this gross universe makes itself known to us in five ways as smell, touch, taste, hearing and sight. Thus we see that out of these *tanmatras* has been produced the gross. And every material object is a combination of these five *tanmatras*, only there is a variety in the combination. That is how the universe presents itself to us in different ways. As for instance, earth, which corresponds to the subtler *tanmatra* *smell*, is composed of  $\frac{1}{2}$  smell and  $\frac{1}{8}$  each of all the other four *tanmatras* ; water corresponds to the finer *tanmatra* *taste* and it is composed of  $\frac{1}{2}$  taste and  $\frac{1}{8}$  each of all the other four *tanmatras*—and so on. Thus the various elements have been formed by the different combination of these *tanmatras*. In this connection I can bring out another point. There may be other combinations, other universes than this universe of ours, and they might have been formed of these very *tanmatras*, but they have been combined and recombined in different ways and that is why we do not perceive them. These *tanmatras* by themselves cannot be seen, but the Yogis (those who have developed a fine power of perception) can see them.

What is true of the macrocosm is true of the microcosm. Our intelligence forms a part of the universal intelligence and that has manifested as this individual egoism. That again has come out in two varieties, the organs and *tanmatras* and the *tanmatras* again have formed this gross body.

But *Prakriti* is said to be insentient. And we have seen that when the equilibrium of the three forces, *Sattwa*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*, which compose *Prakriti*, is lost, then alone does the manifestation of the universe result. But how is the equilibrium lost ? *Prakriti* by itself, which is insentient, cannot produce changes. So there must be some sentient Being behind who is the unwitting cause of changes in this universe. And that Being is known by Indian philosophers as the *Purusha*. Here again rise different schools of philosophy which give different explanations. We shall take up first the Sankhya point of view. According to the Sankhya school of thought there are two external substances, *Purusha*, or Spirit, and *Prakriti*, or matter. *Purusha* is changeless, the eternal witness, and because of its nearness to *Prakriti*, the

*Prakriti* changes and produces this manifold universe. Thus *Purusha* is not the real primary cause, but the unwitting cause of the universe.

The question arises in this connection : How can Spirit act on matter when they are two separate, unlike entities ? To which the Sankhya gives the reply by an analogy : There are the blind man and the lame man. The lame man can get on the shoulders of the blind man and together they can journey on. The blind man by himself cannot walk far, nor can the lame man. But when the lame man gets on the shoulders of the blind man, the blind man can easily reach the end of the journey. The *Purusha* is inactive, but sentient, and because of its nearness to *Prakriti*, *Prakriti* can act. An iron ball when put into the fire assumes the power of burning, but the burning power belongs to the fire and not to the ball. These are analogies and do not solve the real difficulty. For the *Purusha* or spirit is defined as Infinite, Omnipotent and Omnipresent. If that be so, then how can there be two substances ? The matter, if it has an independent and separate existence, will limit the infinitude of the Spirit.

Here Vedanta comes to the rescue. In Vedanta, again, there are two different standpoints and the problem is solved from these two standpoints which really do not contradict each other, but may be said to be the lower and the higher truth. As Swami Vivekananda used to say : " We never travel from untruth to truth, but from truth to higher truth, " and that is very true. Let us take up first the lower standpoint. We have the two substances, *Purusha*, or Spirit, and *Prakriti*, or cause of the universe. It is God that has become all this and really not two separate substances, but two in one.

The *Prakriti*, or what we call matter, is not really separate from the Spirit, but is the *Maya*, the Divine Power of God. As the burning power of fire cannot be separated from fire, so this power which manifests itself as this manifold universe cannot be separated from God to Whom the Power, or *Prakriti*, belongs. In one of the Upanishads we read, " As a spider projects out and takes in the thread ; , as hairs grow out on man's body, so has this universe come out of Him. " Thus God becomes the efficient cause as well as the material cause of the universe. It is God that has become all this and there is nothing outside of or beyond Him. This view is also held by the Tantra philosophy which is another aspect of

Vedanta. And Hindus worship God, in the aspect of creative energy, as the Divine Mother. The *Maya*, or the creative energy, is the Divine Mother ; and this energy is the energy of God. Thus *Purusha* and *Prakriti* represent the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God. They are not separate, but form the two aspects of the Absolute. The question may arise in this connection that if it is the Divine Mother Who has become all this, why is it we do not see the intelligence, the consciousness, present everywhere and in every object ? For, is She not *Chinmayee*—Consciousness Herself ? The answer is, it is not true that there is no consciousness present everywhere, even in what we call dead matter, but we do not see and feel its presence because of our crude way of observation. Western thought marked a sharp line of distinction between what is organic, or living, and what is inorganic, or dead. "An absolute gulf was created between the two—the greatest of all gulfs, namely, that between what is dead and what is alive. Organisation means more or less systematic arrangement of relatively separate parts in a whole suited to fulfil any sort of function. Organism in biology means a discrete body of which the essential constituent is living protoplasm. The term originally indicated the recognition of organisation as essential to life and as opposite to unorganised or dead matter. But recent researches of modern science have removed the gulf between organic and inorganic, living and non-living. All matter is now held to be in a state of organisation. It is said to be constituted of complicated structural elements, and the molecules and atoms are described in fact as miniature solar systems."\* And so it has been said by Le Bon in his *Evolution of Matter*, "As soon as we lift the veil of appearances, matter so inert in its outward aspect is seen to possess an extremely complicated organisation and an intense life."

"Organisation exists in both cases, though more and more complex in what we call living substance. Consciousness is the essence of both, though so obscured in what is called inorganic matter that the latter is deemed unconscious. Yet, even here, science corrects crude observation. Thus irritability was supposed to be a fundamental property of living substance. It is, however, now known that "non-living" matter reacts to external stimuli. Thus its reaction to acid is a

\**Power as Life* by Sir John Woodroffe.

spasm. For knowledge in this direction we are indebted, as all know, to the experiments of the distinguished Indian scientist Sir Jagadish Chandra Bose. By taking as a basis the fact that the most general and delicate sign in life is the electric response, he has shown that this electric response is the reaction of an obscured form of consciousness in matter. He has thus shown by his ingenious experiments the fatigue of metals and its disappearance after rest and the action on these same metals of 'excitants, depressants and poisons.'\*

Thus the truths arrived at by the Upanishadic sages in their ecstatic vision is now proved and demonstrated by the modern science. Those of you who have read the life of Sri Ramakrishna, the great Master, will remember how he used to see consciousness present everywhere. He would say, "Divine Mother is peeping through Her veil, as it were, from everywhere, from every nook and corner."

Next we shall consider the subject from another standpoint. This is the monistic standpoint. This philosophy is based on the supersensuous or superconscious experience where all divergence or manifoldness has vanished like a wild dream and there lie in undifferentiated mass the experiencer, the experience and the experienced. There is but one existence and that is the Absolute, or Brahman, and that one *appears* as many because of our ignorance. In reality, the many, the universe, does not exist, but it is superimposed on the one Reality.

As I have already said, this philosophy is based on experience, on the supersensuous experience. There are four states of consciousness from which we experience the one truth. These four states are *Jagrat* (waking), *Swapna* (dreaming), *Sushupti* (dreamless sleep) and *Turiya* (the super-conscious). In our ordinary plane of consciousness, that is, in our waking state, we experience this sense-world; the universe is then super-imposed on the Truth—the Brahman, as in ignorance we mistake the rope for a snake. In the dream state the dream world is experienced. But we know that the dream state is a dream. It has no reality. But as long as we are dreaming, the dream world is real to us. When we wake up from the dream, then it is that we realise it was a dream. The waking state contradicts the dream state. And the waking

\**Power as Life* by Sir John Woodroffe,

state has a greater reality to us in our life than the dream state. In the dreamless sleep state, we do not experience anything, though there is the consciousness present. We know when we wake up that we had a sound sleep and had a good rest. If the consciousness had not been present, we would not have known that. Then there is the *Turiya* state, or the superconscious experience, where lie in undifferentiated mass the knower, the knowledge and the object of knowledge. There we experience one Absolute Existence. Brahman and Brahman alone exists. We experience the truth in its *Swarupa* or the *propria forma*. And that experience contradicts all other states of experience, and that has a greater reality than even our waking state, for there the purpose of life is achieved by the realisation of Absolute Existence, Absolute Knowledge and Absolute Bliss.

Thus the highest truth is that there is but one impartite Absolute Existence and there is no creation, no manifestation of the universe. The universe is all *Maya*, an illusion—a prolonged dream, as it were.

This can also be shown from the standpoint of metaphysical speculation. Let us take for granted that there are two substances—Spirit and Matter. Now, what is *matter*? The Thing-in-itself, as Kant says, is unknown and unknowable. Let us represent the Thing-in-itself as X. What is known to us as matter is really this X *plus* mind. And what is Spirit? Take the individual self. What knowledge have we of our own self? When I say I am Mr. So and so, I really do not know my real self. In this case also, the Thing-in-itself is unknown and unknowable. Let us represent this Spirit, the Thing-in-itself, as Y. Then what we know as Spirit is really Y *plus* mind. Thus our whole universe represents X *plus* mind and Y *plus* mind—X *plus* mind representing the external world and Y *plus* mind representing the internal world. And both X and Y are the unknown quantities. What makes them appear different? Time, space and causation. What are time, space and causation? They are the modes of the mind. It is really the mind that makes the difference between the external and the internal. Take away mind—what remains? X and Y. Both these are unknown quantities and both are *qualityless*. Had they possessed qualities, they would not remain unknown and unknowable. And when both are qualityless they must be identical. What

makes the difference between the one and the other ? The different qualities. And when both are qualityless they are identical. Hence X is equal to Y, that is, what you call matter is the same as Spirit. It is the Spirit and Spirit alone that exists and which *appears* to us, due to our ignorance, as this manifold universe. Know That and be free—that is the Ideal of Life.

SWAMI PRABHAVANANDA

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## SPIRITUAL REGENERATION\*

SWAMI TRIGUNATITANANDA

**A** world of higher guidance, higher and higher life, greater and greater results—, such is God's world. The All-powerful is in every object and condition, and this world is a changing world, never stationary. We want things to be stationary, but change is a sign of improvement, a condition of growth.

We are talking of the place and conditions in which we are now, and change here is a main characteristic. If we do not change, we do not progress.

There are different processes or methods of change. Certain changes are not proper, but change does not mean going back. Even if unfavourable, that change must produce some good, if we but know how to receive it. We make a change when things are not satisfactory, and in order to have greater satisfaction, we must have greater change. Greater the change, physically, mentally, socially, greater the results.

Those who are the most ambitious make the greatest change ; they will always be up-and-doing—they will always have certain manners, customs, practices. The spiritual change is the highest change. Being spiritual is something extraordinary ; it doesn't mean undutiful, senseless, but beyond common sense. 'Spiritual' means 'higher, still higher.'

And in order to make spiritual change, we have to make everything spiritual. We are to begin with the body : our manners, taste, and everything else have to be changed. Spiritual life entails the least expenditure of time and energy to produce successful result, as opposed to worldliness which takes all time and energy and gives nothing in turn.

So we find out some means by which to save energy and time, and yet get sufficient result. It may be away from the ordinary course of life and may not be liked by others. But those who have great ambition for it, and are aware of the purpose of life, cannot but make great changes which may not be liked by others.

\*From the notes of a lecture delivered by the Swami in the Hindu Temple, San Francisco, California, U S. A. The Swami was a direct disciple of Bhagawan Sri Ramakrishna. He was preaching Vedanta in America for twelve years, from 1903 to 1915.

They keep in mind their one object, and work on accordingly. They generate (not produce in an ordinary manner) a certain force ; to generate is to bring in a certain force ; to regenerate is to do it over again. We led our life so many years without satisfaction, so we begin again, make a thorough change ; that is regeneration.

Such a change is necessary for accomplishing great results. By the law of regeneration which is not only scriptural but also scientific, we are sure to progress. By ordinary methods we fail ; so we turn to the use of higher methods and to the making of complete change and it will be shown by the result.

Regeneration cannot manifest itself unless internal life is changed. It is in the life ; all ideas, all impressions, are to be changed. By the law of regeneration, a sick person can be well ; a poor person wealthy ; an unsuccessful one successful ; an ignorant one wise ; a useless person useful. Because it is not a material law, but a law of higher life, of ideas of greater and higher duty.

The mortal can be immortal, man can be god by regeneration ; earth can be changed into heaven by regeneration. But we have to generate the spiritual force, and we can do it if we fulfill the law. In worldly affairs one may not be successful, but in spiritual affairs he can do any and every thing.

The spiritual people can be worldly ; they know what worldliness is, more than even worldly people, through the law of regeneration. But they do not want to be worldly. Spiritually regenerated people are universal, never narrow or limited. Their power and vision are universal.

Regeneration in the beginning makes one appear negligent to the world ; but it is not really so. He is preparing to conquer and rule it. He knows more than others ; he is in the world, yet outside, for his vision is so large.

The law of regeneration is necessary for the poor and the ignorant. And he who is "poor in spirit" will be great. But if, from the beginning, we are so ignorant or foolish as to think we have learnt, and known enough, there is no road for us ; there is nothing but darkness.

But those who are ignorant and unwise, can go through spiritual discipline and get the result. But they will have to bear two things in mind : first, that they are of no use,

no value without regeneration ; secondly, that they cannot be of real value unless they realise the Truth.

We came ignorantly, live ignorantly and pass ignorantly. But for those who realize the higher Truth, their lives will be transformed into higher lives.

In order to be regenerated, we must go through a cleansing process of spiritual discipline, and take up those ideas which do not satisfy the world, but are above it. Then we can live a regenerated, spiritual life.

The spiritual life is not expensive, nor is it offensive to the world : it is most economical, most necessary for this world. In the arduous task of building up the spiritual life, there is no prescribed rule ; each person must follow his or her own method.

But even the severe discipline through which he passes will be made easy through perseverance and determination ; and perseverance and determination come from the amount of earnestness of the aspirant. If our object be great, great will be our determination.

Regeneration comes when all material means have been exhausted and have failed. A patient, about to pass away, is left to the mercy of God : he can never be saved in any way but the divine way. That is spiritual culture. It must be effective. If anything can be effective, it is spiritual.

Material things may succeed, but are not lasting ; failure will be coming in the wake of success. But in spiritual culture, even a little effort brings success ; it never fails, it is never lost. If, in the material world, there is success, how much greater should it be in the spiritual ! Spiritual methods cannot fail, cannot but bring in success, there will be no chance of failure. Spiritual success is simple, pure, perfect, infinite, unmingled.

So we must go through spiritual discipline in our life. Those who have any desire for spiritual life must try for regeneration. If immense be the mind-force which rises from control of material things, then how much more potent must be the spiritual force which originates from spiritual life.

That life which has passed through spiritual regeneration will last for ever. It is of the spirit, and not subject to destruction or decay. The law of physical regeneration is the law of physical change, but the law of spiritual regeneration brings about thorough change of human life.

By the law of change, a substance may lose its value : diamond is converted into charcoal, gold into ashes ; but we do not want that backward change. By spiritual regeneration charcoal is made a diamond, and ashes gold : the lower the higher.

The world would have been destroyed if there were not spiritual people who had discovered the law happiness and misery, and the higher laws of man's life. We have not to borrow from any source or depend upon the law of heredity or transmission, or upon teachers. Any ordinary man can rise to divinity on earth, if he chooses : that is man's regeneration. Shall we sanguinely hope we may follow the spiritual law and make our life more satisfactory and more useful to the world ?

The Law is in God and God in Law ; the All-intelligent, All-pervading God knows the desire of the heart of the earnest seeker of Truth, and will surely guide him. One who wants to have spiritual regeneration will be guided by the Law. Law is perfect justice. If we have faith, we can establish our relationship with God.

SWAMI TRIGUNATITANANDA

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# BUDDHA AS A LIGHT OF THE WORLD

SWAMI GHANANANDA

## I

**T**HOUGH a good deal of our information about Buddha and Buddhism has come down to us through traditions from generation to generation for the last twenty-five centuries, we owe the legacy of a correct knowledge of the historical facts to the earnest and sincere pioneers who have done their labour of love in history, in archæology, in iconography, and in literature. More avenues for research and study may open up in the future and more light may be thrown on the personality and teachings of Buddha and his movement. But one can confidently assert that any work done in the future can only augment the lustre of the Light of Asia, not diminish it but endow us with a better vision of its glory, and justify our calling Buddha not merely the Light of Asia but a Light of the World.

Buddha is indeed a leading Light of the World, a great Saviour of Humanity. There is a peculiar charm in his personality and teachings which casts a spell over all mankind ; there are particular elements in the religion he taught which appeal to all religions, all nations, all sects, and all men. He is accepted and followed not only in India, China, Tibet, Siam, Japan, Ceylon, and Central Asia, but also in Siberia and Swedish Lapland, and his influence is felt throughout the whole civilised world at the present day : his noble thoughts might have crossed the Atlantic and the Pacific and travelled over to the eastern and western shores of far-off America, had it been given to a Columbus to discover it earlier than it was. What makes Buddha such a saviour, such a messenger from on High ?

## II

Should the history of human progress be graphically represented, it would be a picture of ebb and flow, or rise and fall. Progress after progress is like unto waves of the ocean. One wave rises and falls, and another continues the onward march. On the crest of the rising wave is the greatest man in the world at any time, indicating the highest level to which the progress of man can attain in his country. Christ, Zoroaster, Confucius, Mohammed, and other great personalities have appeared from time to time on the crest of wave after wave of human happiness and progress. They are the great Teachers of Mankind, its Guardian Angels, its Beacon Lights. Not the least amongst them is Gautama Buddha.

### III

The Sage of Chelsea raised the question whether the history of a nation is made up of the lives of its heroes or of innumerable biographies. Whatever view one may take—whether that great heroes it is that mould a nation, direct its destinies, and pilot it to its haven, or that every man or woman forming a unit lays a brick in constructing the edifice of national life—, it is a fact that heroes or lesser men express a power of synthesis, of building up, and that there are bound to be differences in the degrees of expression of that power which is but one and one alone. This is true also of the sphere of spirituality. Sri Ramakrishna observed : “As a large and powerful steamer moves swiftly over the waters, towing along flats and barges behind it—so, when a Saviour descends, He easily carries thousands to the Haven of Safety across the Ocean of Maya. The Avatara is the Sun of Divine Knowledge Whose light dispels the accumulated ignorance of ages.” All those who are looked upon as Incarnations of God, Messengers of Life or Prophets of Humanity are several embodiments of the highest spiritual power and worth in the world in their respective times. It is their unique power that confers a rare value and significance on the words which fall from their lips. Many a pundit reads out to-day the very same Gita which Sri Krishna of yore preached to the warrior Arjuna in the midst of the battle-field, but what a difference in the effect produced and the light thrown on the problems of life and death ! Many a clergyman reproduces the very same Sermon on the Mount which was preached by the Great One of Galilee, but what a contrast between the value of the utterance of the one and that of the reproduction of the other ! In one case, a marvellous power spoke, gave an impetus to society and society heard and moved ; in the other, there is no such power and the effect is next to nothing.

Buddha too possessed the stupendous power which has moved the world. He had such direct realisation of Truth, such adamant faith in himself and his message that, when he delivered the latter, it burst like a bomb-shell upon society, and created a thunder which still lives in its echo, and created a flash of lightning which still lives in its reflection.

As almost every man sees the existence of a principle in and through a personality, and almost invariably associates the highest wisdom and truth with their best and greatest embodiments, an Incarnation is worshipped as God Himself. This is the significance of the homage paid to Christ by a Christian, to Zoroaster by a Zoroastrian, to Rama, Krishna, and Ramakrishna by a Hindu, to Mohammed by a Muslim, and to Buddha by a Buddhist. We find that to-day more than a

third of the entire human race worship the great Gautama, though he himself abstained from preaching either the Personal God or the Impersonal Absolute, and though such worship means a violation of his own injunctions.

#### IV

Powerful as his message was, and granted to him as the stupendous spiritual conquest of humanity has been, his personality was the gentlest, sweetest, and kindest ever known to history.

He was compassion incarnate. It was compassion which made his mind sensitive to the sufferings of the world around him, induced him to give up his wife and child and father, wealth and kingdom and position, comforts and conveniences and luxuries, and go out in quest of Truth, realise It, and preach It to others. Speaking of the supreme importance of Truth, he told Channa, his charioteer :

" Unto this I came

And not for thrones : the kingdom that I crave

Is more than many realms—for all things pass

To change and death. Bring me forth Kantaka ! "

Again, casting a glance at his sleeping partner at the time of his leaving the palace :

" Wife ! child ! father ! people ! ye must share

A little while the anguish of this hour

That light may break and all flesh learn the Law.

Now am I fixed, and now I will depart

Never to come again, till what I seek

Be found—if fervent search and strife avail. "

How many of the world's princes and kings could think and speak likewise in the name of compassion or Truth for their subjects and all humanity ? And how many can think and speak in the same strain as Buddha to-day ? An Asoka or a Marcus Aurelius may approach him in gentleness and kindness, but not rival him : he stands unique for his renunciation, his love, his sweetness. Surely the presence of such a personality to-day would contribute a million times more towards creating peace and good will on earth than all the Conferences and Leagues of the World put together. It is Buddha's compassion and selflessness that give a profound human interest to his great renunciation and teaching.

#### V

The different Teachers who have appeared in different periods in different parts of the world have given different messages to men to suit their needs. Sri Krishna taught : Do your duty in whatever station you may be placed by circumstances, but be unattached. Don't

avoid work, for you are bound to do it by your very nature. Be unattached to the fruits thereof and offer them, whether they are good or bad, to the Lord ; nay, not only the fruits of your work, but your whole and entire self must you offer to your Lord, that is the highest religion. The Messenger of Nazareth preached : Be ready, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. Do not delay a moment. Leave nothing for to-morrow. Get ready for that final event, which may overtake you immediately, even now. Mohammed was essentially a preacher of *Islam*—the religion of submission and dedication to God ; and also of equality, or brotherhood of man, the brotherhood of all Mussalmans. We therefore find this equality practised more in the religion of Islam than in any other religion. “The Sultan of Turkey may buy a Negro from the mart of Africa, and bring him in chains to Turkey ; but, should he become a Mohammedan and have sufficient merit and abilities, he might even marry the daughter of the Sultan.” And Buddha preached : “Root out selfishness. Your wife, your child, your parents, your possessions—all these make you selfish. Selfishness is a form of desire, kill it, and put out your desires. Everything in the world is momentary and life a misery. Be free by rooting out selfishness by giving up desires.”

The strong ethical note in the message of Buddha has endeared him to the whole world more than anything else, and as all the nations of to-day can preserve themselves only by being ethical, good and considerate to each other, his message will be a great boon to them and his personality a source of constant inspiration. Therefore it is that harmlessness, goodness, purity, and selflessness are warmly appreciated by men at the present day, whether they express themselves through politics, social life or international relationships. Will the world respond to Buddha more adequately than it is doing to-day ? Will it move more towards the direction of this Light ?

## DRAVIDIAN INDIA\*

**I**T was for long the fashion to give credit to all that is best in the ancient Indian civilization to the Indo-Aryans and consider the part played by Dravidian culture and civilization as almost negligible. This is probably to be accounted for by the paucity of materials in the past with which to reconstruct the history of Dravidian India as well as a tendency on the part of scholars to give an undue and preponderant importance to the study of Sanskrit and the Indo-Aryan civilization. In recent years, however, thanks to the researches of scholars in the field of archæology and the discoveries brought to light, the high antiquity and value of the Dravidian civilization is slowly being recognised, though the last word on the subject has not yet been said. That if the Indo-Aryan civilization had something to give, it had equally something to take from the Dravidian civilization, that the present Hindu civilization is the resultant of such an intermixture and not due to any one element alone, as it has been claimed to be all along, and that the Dravidians possessed an independent and original civilization and culture of their own long before the Aryans set foot on India,—these and other things Mr. T. R. Seshayengar, M. A., M. R. A. S., F. R. H. S., Assistant Professor of History, Pachaiyappa's College, Madras, has endeavoured to prove in his volume on *Dravidian India*.

The first chapter deals with the date of the Mahabharata and the Ramayana and with the political condition of South India during the epic periods. The author discusses the various theories as to the origin of the Indo-Aryan epics and eventually falls in with the opinion of Prof. Macdonnell as the most approximate one. According to Prof. Macdonnell, there are three different stages in the growth and development of the Mahabharata, the first belonging to the 5th century B. C., the second roughly to the 3rd century B. C., and the third stage roughly to the 1st century B. C., while in the case of the Ramayana there are two stages, the first belonging roughly to the 6th century B. C., when Valmiki worked up the current legends and tales into a single homogeneous production, and the second approximately to the 3rd century B. C., when additions were made to the original poem. The author here rightly deprecates the attempt of scholars to turn to these two epics to find materials for the reconstruction of ancient South Indian History, since the periods depicted

\* Gleaned from the Indian Social Reformer.

in them are more modern than the student of South Indian history will hope to find, and remarks that the future historian of ancient South India will do well to seek for his material in the numismatic, epigraphic, literary, linguistic, traditional and archæological records of the Dravidian people rather than in the epics of Aryan India.

The second chapter is devoted to a discussion of the origin of the Dravidians. Of the many theories on this highly interesting subject, which the author discusses at length, the two that stand out pre-eminently are the theory of the Mediterranean origin and that of the indigenous origin. The upholders of the former theory maintain, on the basis of the recent archæological discoveries at Harappa in the Punjab and at Mohenjo-daro in Sind, that the original home of the Dravidians should have been the Mediterranean, because the Dravidian civilization of India bears striking resemblance to the culture developed in the Mediterranean area, while the advocates of the latter theory hold that the Dravidians are an indigenous race who had been living from immemorial times in South India. Mr. Sesha Iyengar, however, accepts the last theory as the correct one and as being in accord with popular tradition.

In the third chapter the author deals with the glories and achievements of the Dravidians and shows how the Dravidians had already developed a civilization of their own, long before the Aryan civilization was transplanted in their midst, and had established their title to greatness and glory in the field of commerce, literature and social organisations, etc. The author here corrects the wrong impression, generally prevalent, that Tamil is derived from the classical Sanskrit and proves that the Tamil language has an originality and a singularity of its own, independent of Sanskrit, as typified in the three immortal Tamil works of *Tolkappiyam*, *Silappathikaram* and the *Kural*, and that, though it has no doubt been influenced by Sanskrit so far as its vocabulary is concerned, the Dravidian dialects, in their turn, affected the sounds, the structure, the idiom and the vocabulary of Sanskrit. The last chapter which treats of the ancient South Indian polity under three distinct periods known as the Pre-historic period (from the earliest times up to 1000 B. C.), the Semi-historic period (1000 to 100 B. C.), and the Historic period (100 B. C. to 400 A. D.), throws a flood of light on the political and social conditions of South India during those periods.

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**BHARATHA NIDHI** [A Malayalam monthly : Published by P. Krishnan Nampyathiri, B. A. (HONS.), Vydika Karyalayam, Chavara, Travancore. Subscription Rs. 2-8-0 ; for students Rs. 2].

It was the idea of the Swami Vivekananda that, if India is to retain her spirituality and the Indian masses are to be raised and liberated from the shackles of priesthood, all the grand ideas of the Vedas should be thrown broadcast among the masses. Mr. P. Krishnan Nampyathiri, B. A. (HONS.) with a desire to carry out this idea of the Swamiji has begun the publication of the translation of the Rig Veda Samhitha in Malayalam through his newly started Malayalam monthly *Bharatha Nidhi* the first two issues of which have been sent to us for review. The publication contains the text of the Vedas, with direct translations in prose and notes based on the great commentators. From the third issue Patanjala Yoga-Sutras, with commentaries based on five commentators, will also be included. It is highly gratifying to find that a Kerala Brahmin himself has come forward to throw open the treasure of the Vedas to the masses of that caste-ridden province. We wish our young contemporary every success.

**E. S. MONTAGU—A STUDY IN INDIAN POLITY** (G. A. Natesan & Co., Madras. Price 8 as.).

The late Mr. Montagu, the joint author of the Indian Constitution along with Lord Chelmsford, has of late been very much in the public eye. This brilliant man, at the time he brought into being the Indian Constitution was subjected to rather severe criticism from those who should have known better and these have now been given the opportunity to properly estimate the worth of the great man. Messrs. G. A. Natesan & Co, the well known publishers of Madras, have in the short study before us rendered the task of appreciating the man at his worth all the easier. The publication is very timely just now when Indians of all shades of opinion are seriously considering the question of further constitutional advance. We heartily welcome the publication to the ranks of Indian political literature.

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**SREE KRISHNA'S MESSAGES AND REVELATIONS**, by Baba Bharati. (G. A. Natesan & Co., Madras. Price 8 as.).

At the request of an American disciple of the Hindu Sannyasin Baba Bharati, who did so much to familiarise the American public with the great teachings of Sree Krishna, Messrs. G. A. Natesan & Co. have reprinted from the Swami's bigger book entitled *Sree Krishna* the chapter entitled "Messages and Revelations." Those who are familiar with the author's inspiring works will welcome this pocket-book of messages and revelations.

A. S.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### SRI RAMAKRISHNA ASHRAMA, MYSORE.

Srimat Swami Sharvanandaji started for Mercara from Madras on the 26th of May last, at the invitation of the Vedanta Society, Mercara, Coorg, where he delivered a series of stimulating lectures and created great enthusiasm and interest among the people. From Coorg, he was invited to Mysore where also he delivered a series of lectures. At the request of the provisional local committee with Mr. Dharmarakshaka Banumayya as its president, Swami Sharvanandaji opened the Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama at Dewan's Road in Mysore on the 11th of June last. Srimat Swami Siddheswarananda has been placed in temporary charge of the new Ashrama and receives very substantial assistance from Srimat Swami Srivasananda who has been doing valuable service in several parts of the Mysore State by constant touring and lecturing for the past so many months.

Swami Sharvanandaji returned to Madras after his lecturing tour on the 18th June last.

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### SRI RAMAKRISHNA MISSION STUDENTS' HOME, MYLAPORE, MADRAS.

The report of the working of the highly useful institution for 1924 is a record of very satisfactory progress. The most important feature of the year was the erection of a separate block of buildings for the Residential High School at a cost of nearly Rs. 1,25,000, which was rendered possible by the munificent help rendered by the Nattukottai Nagarathar Community. At the beginning of the year there were 109 boarders, the strength at the end of the year having been 125. The students were drawn from almost every district of the Presidency and represented all classes of the Hindu community. The ideal aimed at in the institution is to create an atmosphere where study is not divorced from practical life. Teachers and pupils are encouraged to take a live interest in the well-being and management of the institution and work together in close and harmonious relations. Particular stress is laid on the building up of character on the enduring basis of religion.

Pupils who fail to get through successfully in the ordinary course of studies are given training in handicrafts and an attempt is being made to give a *vocational bias* to the ordinary curriculum of the school. And to this end, carpentry, rattan work, knitting, tailoring, weaving and smithy are taught all boys undergoing general instruction in the school at stated hours. The management contemplate to further extend this side of their activity by erecting and scientifically equipping a workshop fitted with a lathe and electric power and it is hoped that their anticipations will soon be realised.

Srimat Swami Saswatananda accepted the Wardenship of the Ramakrishna Student's Home. The swami was doing splendid service along

with other workers of the Mission in the recent South Indian Flood Relief.

#### THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA, ALLAHABAD.

The report of the Sevashrama for 1924, which we have just received, shows that the institution continues to do the same excellent work which it has been ungrudgingly and in the spirit of service doing for the last fourteen years, in helping the poor and relieving the sick. During the year under notice, 16,749 sick poor were treated in the out-door dispensary attached to the institution, and they represented all the great communities—Hindus, Muhammadans, and Christians. The Mission has been working with quite inadequate means to cope with an ever increasing amount of disease in the capital city of an important province which is also a great centre of pilgrimage. The Mission has just a small building of its own where its stock of medicine are kept for distribution. Through the generous help of the public the Mission has been able to acquire a small plot of ground on which it is proposed to erect a small hospital. Even this, it is estimated, will cost approximately Rs. 10,000 but it is sincerely to be hoped that the appeal of the Mission which has been doing work in a purely unsectarian spirit and without distinction of caste, creed or colour will meet with generous response.

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#### THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION CHARITABLE DISPENSARY, BELUR.

We have great pleasure in reviewing the annual report of the Ramakrishna Mission Charitable Dispensary, Belur, Howrah, for the year 1924. For the last few years it is rendering help not only to the people of Belur but also to those of Sakoa, Uttarapara, Sreerampur, Ramrajatola, Baranagore, etc. Last year the number of patients from all castes and communities was 9,979 of whom 3,997 were new cases and the rest old ones. As Belur and other places in the neighbourhood are infested with a virulent type of malaria, regular and systematic measures were taken against it by some young and energetic men of Belur and we are glad that the attack of malaria was far less than in previous years, which will be seen from the fact that in 1923 there were 1,812 cases of malaria, whereas during the year under report we had only 1,371 cases for treatment. For the last few years, the Dispensary could not make any arrangement for treatment of Kala-azar patients. Last year a doctor Sannyasin of the Mission commenced giving two injections regularly every week. The result was fairly satisfactory. The number of patients treated was 33. Generally the patients are given medicines for two days at a time and if necessary diet and pecuniary help are also given them. We render our heartfelt thanks to the doctors who helped the dispensary with their advice in time of need and to the donors for their contributions in some shape or other.

The management of the Charitable Dispensary thank one and all those who co-operated with their work by giving either money or medicines, etc. They express their best thanks to Messrs. B. K. Paul & Co.,

who supplied them with the general stock of medicines as well as those articles which were required from time to time for the dispensary. As the Dispensary is a Charitable institution which has been serving thousands of men and women in times of distress, any help in the shape of money, medicine or the like will be thankfully received and acknowledged. We fervently hope this appeal for help which the institution so richly deserves will meet with an adequate response. All contributions can be sent to :

*The President, Ramakrishna Mission, Belur, (Howrah).*

The Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, Mylapore, Madras, sends us the following statement of accounts of the South Indian Flood Relief work, after publication of the Flood Relief Report :

Date	Particulars	Receipts			Disbursements		
1925	Opening Balance ...	12,733	3	2			
Jany. 28	Amount reserved for printing charges recredited ...	150	0	0			
	Amount received from Head Quarters for trainage to workers. ...	160	0	0			
Feby. 26	Subscription from Parthasarathy Swami Sabha ...	30	0	0			
May. 1	Value of Gold received from V. N. Swami ...	44	13	0			
May. 4.	Value of 2 unused cheque leaves ...	0	2	0			
Cheque No. C051994	Amount remitted to Head Quarters including insurance charges ...				160	7	0
„ 995	Postage etc. for sending reports, cost of paper & wrapper & miscellaneous ...				72	12	6
„ 996	Printing charges ...				60	10	0
„ 997	Auditor's Fees ...				35	0	0
	Total.	13,118	2	2	328	13	6
	Closing balance				12,789	4	8*
	Grand Total.	13,118	2	2	13,118	2	2

\* Remitted to Head Quarters.

Audited and found correct

C. RAMASWAMI IYENGAR,

K. R. SUBRAMANIPILLAI A, L. A. A

Secretary.

Certified Accountant & Auditor.

The 90th birthday anniversary of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated on March 1st with usual fervour and devotion at the Hindu Temple, San Francisco, California. The morning service at 11 was conducted by Swami Prakashananda. It opened with a harmony of Sanskrit chants led by the Swami accompanied by Mrs. L. Burnham and Mrs. T. J. Allan, after which the Swami gave benediction, which was followed by a soul stirring song to the Divine Mother translated from Bengali by the Swami for the occasion and sung by Mrs. Allan with organ accompaniment. The Swami spoke on "Sri Ramakrishna and the Universality of His Message." His universal love, His all-inclusiveness and harmony of religious faiths were the dominant note of the discourse. The service ended with another song especially adapted for the occasion, followed by benediction. The evening service at 8 o'clock was conducted by Swami Prabhavananda, the harmony of chants and the same song opened the service. "Sri Ramakrishna, the Fulfilment of the Age" was the theme of the evening lecture. Sri Ramakrishna came "not to destroy but to fulfil." His life, the life that had preceded Him, nay, Sri Ramakrishna is the consummation of all prophets.

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The death of Desabandhu C. R. Das has deprived India of one of her most glorious sons in a critical period of her history. If Mahatma Gandhi is one of the highest embodiments of her *Brahmana* ideal, the Desabandhu was one of the highest incarnations of her *Kshatriya* spirit.

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# THE VEDANTA KESARI

"Let the lion of Vedanta roar."

"Let me tell you, strength, strength is what we want

And the first step in getting strength is to uphold

The Upanishads and believe that 'I am the Atman,'

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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## PRAYER

स्मृतौ शास्त्रे वैद्ये शकृन्कवितागानफणितौ  
पुराणो मन्त्रे वा स्तुतिनटनहास्येष्वचतुरः  
कथं राज्ञां प्रीतिर्भवति मयि कोऽहं पशुपते  
पशुं मां सर्वज्ञ प्रथितकृपया पालयविभो ॥

I am not skilful in Dharma Sastras or in the ordinary Sastras. Neither am I clever in the science of medicine or omens. I am quite so unskilful in the making of verses or singing. Even in the arts of expounding the Puranas, of incantations, of flattery, of dancing and of buffoonery am I quite so unskilful. How can I, being such, ever come to be noticed by kings? O Lord, Who art All-Knowing, Who art celebrated for being merciful, and Who livest everywhere, have, O Lord, have mercy on me, who do not even know who I am.

SIVANANDA LAHARI.

## ONE OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S DISCOURSES

DONE INTO VERSE BY 'ERIC'

Wouldst thou see God ? Is it thy heart's desire  
To gaze with eyes of thine  
Into His holy eyes, nor fear their fire ?  
To brook the light divine  
'That falls and flashes from His faultless face  
Searching the inmost nook  
Of all thy being, with all-seeing look ?  
Then, learn of me how thou mayst gain that grace.  
Wouldst thou, indeed, see God ?  
Couldst thou endure  
To stand, unrobed and bare  
Body and soul, in His pure presence, sure  
And unshamed ? There  
Where knowledge dwells of deeds that thou hast done  
And where thine every thought  
Into the radiance of His light is brought ?  
Then lo ! my lips point out the way. 'Tis one—  
One, and one only. Lo ! the path is plain.  
Love not the love of life !  
Love not the world nor any worldly gain ;  
Play small part in the strife  
For fame or high estate ; but these disdain  
And hold them of light worth ;  
Then shalt thou learn the lesson of new birth  
And, in His beauty, see the King—and reign.  
Thus, while within thee, one desire shall stay of lesser  
lower sort  
Than God Himself, thou canst not trace the way.  
Awake ! Be not the sport  
Of petty passions, little lusts or great.  
Lift up thy heart, and take  
Control of all thy senses, that they make  
No slave of thee, their head ! Then fear no fate.

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## EDITORIAL NOTES

**A**S man is a gregarious being, he is bound to form and maintain a certain relationship with his fellow-men. Even as the sons of a family are closely knit together in bonds of fraternal love, the several members of the human family are bound by ties of mutual obligation and mutual aid. Every individual has perfect freedom for self-expression, but it is limited by the freedom of others. A recognition of such limitation of the rights of a man, a group, a country or a nation by those of others is needed for the smooth working of the social machinery, and is implicit in the laws of a league or corporation. These laws require the life and actions of every unit to be so regulated and adjusted as not to militate against the general good of the whole, but on the other hand be definitely contributive to it.

Though all men, women, and children have perfect liberty to exercise their civic rights and privileges, they have to discharge their civic duties and responsibilities. They should bear in mind that the civic ideal requires every man not to devote his life for his selfish ends, but to adequately respond to the call of the *commune*: Love for personal gain has to give place to love for the group; sacrifice has to take the place of selfishness. The energy of none in the civic community should be mis-spent or misdirected, but each should on the other hand, contribute his own quota to the enriching and vitalising of the communal life and through it the national. At no period in the history of a people in the world has there ever been a time for a single wasted life. Such a life detracts from the energy of the aggregate on which there would be too many calls, and proves parasitic to humanity. Be it remembered that life is a constant struggle towards progressive evolution, and every member of the human family has to take his or her part; an unwilling fighter is as reprehensible as a traitor, who betrays the honour of the country before its foe. The person who consciously or unconsciously fails to obey the laws of civic duty knows nothing of the demand which a perfect civic life makes upon the individual, nor of the great problems which can be solved by the combined energy of the civic group. Dead is the heart of the man who has no love for his com-

mune. He is unfit to be a unit thereof. Bereft is he of all that burning passion for country and nation which is a potent factor in the formation of strong and virile character. He has no feeling even for himself and his home, for he who denies his country denies himself.

History shows that our ancestors understood and translated into action the civic ideal. They knew that cities are the schools of the empire, the civic life the seed of the national, civic duty the touchstone of national responsibility, and to the civic life it is that the individual stands most directly and most permanently related. They therefore invested their cities and towns with a halo of sanctity. These were something living to them. They built palaces and temples, pagodas and parks which still stand today as monuments speaking majestically though silently of centuries of mutual aid and co-operation. From Kedarnath and Badri Narayan to Cape Comorin and Rameswar, every place and town has its sacred history glorified by a spiritual imagination into a *Sthalapurana*. This love of the dwelling place raised the grand and holy city of Benares, the very heart of Hindu India, with its myriads of temples and concourse of devout pilgrims, and also the beautiful Conjeevaram with its wide roadways that lead to the temple entrance and the splendid arch that spans just in front. It raised again the glorious Pataliputra, Hastinapura, and Kanouj in ancient India, and also Tanjore in a later period. Besides these great cities, there were also thousands of villages scattered throughout the land which were complete and perfect civic units, in which the headman, the priest, the teacher of the *pīal* school, the peasant, the smith, the carpenter, and other craftsmen and artisans had all a place and contributed to a harmonious civic life. And how sturdy the civic sense revealed in the literature and art of the land as well ! Valmiki has put his whole heart and soul into the city of Ayodhya which he describes so beautifully, and the workmen who erected the queen of all temples in Madura, which is a model of artistic loveliness, symmetry and design, with the city around, have captured alive the highest architectural beauty and perfection. The rolling river with its rows of bathing ghats, the tall grand *Aswattha* affording a cool shade for the travellers to rest, the quiet grazing cows which are considered even today as the very emblem of innocence and gentleness as well as an auspicious

mark of wealth and plenty —all these even were literally worshipped. The earth itself they trod upon was the Goddess of prosperity. The broad highways for the vehicles and the thronging crowd, the spacious meeting grounds which served as pleasant rendezvous in the evening hours, and the wide temple yards and pathways which could accomodate thousands of devotees who would come to see processions and festivals prove how the people gathered and lived in the joy of citizenship which knew no distinction of the high from the low, the rich from the poor, the court from the camp, and the priest from the layman.

The Indian's intense passion for his dwelling place, the sacred Aryavarta, could carve slowly and steadily the mighty Indian civilisation in the past ; for it was by serving the smaller unit that we acquired the power to build and preserve the nation. Even today, a well-knit organisation in our country and a well-ordered co-operation between its several provinces, castes, and creeds, which are needed for national growth and strength, can be rendered possible only by men and women who have the highest possible realisation of civic sense. The man who does not stir a finger to put out the blazing fire which consumes a neighbouring house, or even to keep his own street free from foul filth is not the man who can respond to the call of the nation. It is civic morality that blossoms into national dignity and self-respect. Study the history of Japan and see how she could in troublous times put her house in order in a single generation. Her dutiful children have made her the prosperous Queen of the East through their civic and national strength. A lesson from them in the beauty and cleanliness of their homes and streets far more deserves our attention than all the volumes of political philosophy or economy put together. We too can put our own land in order by losing our little selves in a love for perfecting an ideal civic life which can eventually bring about the highest national consciousness. Be it remembered that there is no place for luxury or individual caprice in the life of the ideal commune. An avaricious lawyer who forgets his failure to minister to economic self-sufficiency and hoards his wealth by exploiting his own kith and kin in his own town is as much a drain to his country as an idle prince who neglects his kingdom and travels for pleasure and enjoyment

in a foreign land. A pariah may do cleaning work and a priest perform worship in a temple to the Holiest of the Holy; but the pariah is far greater than the priest, if the latter fails to rid the sanctuary of stinking smell and greasy dirt which come from long neglect. There are, at any time, in any country in the world, so many evils to be remedied and so much misery to be removed that if we all respond adequately to the call of our race and community, we shall realise how soon we can build mighty bulwarks and battlements in the uncultivated spaces of our collective and individual life, and unforgettably learn how there is no room even for a single human parasite.

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The civic ideal of a perfect commune has to be revived in modern India, as it has been lost at the present day. Such resuscitation will not be difficult as western civic life furnishes us with examples worthy of emulation, and as, under the present circumstances in India, western thoughts and ideas are exercising a very considerable influence on Indian life. In sanitation, education, industry, agriculture, the arts and crafts and a hundred other branches of work, successful improvements can be made by organised co-operation without any appreciable strain upon the citizens and citizenesses of our land. The labour involved will, of course, be mostly a labour of love. Every village, town, and city can have an association of educated members chosen from amongst the young and the elderly, who can easily spare a part of their time and energy for giving primary and even secondary education. By a similar method, the sanitation of every place can be made as perfect as in any country in the world. Labour-guilds, associations for mutual aid in industry, and co-operative societies for facilitating the work and fulfilling the needs of farmers and peasants can be formed throughout all villages and towns with a little earnestness and self sacrifice on the part of the citizens. An initiative in the direction can be taken by the enlightened members of every community and after a time, the work in agriculture, industry and so forth can be improved by men who may be deputed to foreign countries for higher specialisation.

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A city or a *commune* cannot make a nation ; the part cannot make the whole. However well-ordered and well-maintained the civic group may be, such groups can no more

form a nation than a league of nations, each of which is working in a spirit of narrow individualism, though posing itself as an unselfish maker of international peace and harmony can make a 'parliament of man or a federation of the world'. The nation is given birth to and nursed into greatness by stronger and deeper forces than the civic, though they may be adumbrated by the *commune*. A strong consciousness of the superiority of race and of the cultural heritages of the past and a love of country and of one's own people won't be sufficient. They have to be supplemented by the principles of co-operation and co-ordination, the bond of tight-knit discipline and mutual aid. This solidarity of interests and unity of purpose is the offspring of life-giving and life-moulding ideas and feelings like love of freedom and motherland and religion which have the highest power to unify. What a strong and vast sweep mediaeval Christianity made throughout Europe, and witness the unification that resulted through reverence for the Church. The whole of Christendom could rise as one man, and every country could send its armies and generals to fight the Saracens for regaining Palestine. It is love of country and common political interest that have made Switzerland a strong nationality at the present day, divided as it is between three languages and two religions. It was love of equality and freedom, hatred of tyranny and privilege that kindled the fire of the French Revolution.

The great obstacles to the creation of a sustained mass-movement in India to day, and bringing into play all the available forces that lie scattered in a disorganised condition and focussing them for achieving the national goal are sectarianism in religion and privilege of caste. An effective remedy for the ill-feeling and animosity between the upper and lower castes of the Hindu fold on the one hand, and the Hindus and Muslims on the other, is to unite them through higher fundamental principles of culture and religion which are always unsectarian, and also through a deep love for the common motherland which transcends all caste and creed. The Brahman must join hands with the non-Brahman, the Moslem with the Hindu, the aristocracy with the proletariat, and the priest with the pariah, if India is to rise again as a nation in the world. If the Brahman stands for privilege and power, and the non-Brahman in his ignorance

and foolishness wants to bring down the Brahman to his own level in culture, education, and other matters, both are doing an incalculable injury to their country which gives and must give place to both. The instinct of communal expansion is good, but the rising of one community at the expense of another means severing a limb of the nation and this is a loss to both. In a similar way, if the Hindu and the Muslim cannot agree in thinking that the same God is worshipped by both in different ways, India cannot become fit to be a nation. It must be borne in mind that self-government alone cannot give national unity and strength in any country. Culture, religion, race, and geographical distinctness are also conditions required. India is already a distinct geographical unit. But she has to develop her cultural unity and religious harmony, and not merely be content with her work in the political direction. The Congress, for a long time, had been representing only the political phase which is but one of the several phases of the national movement in India. The present "constructive programme" of Indian political leaders which is being attempted to be carried out was drawn up only the other day. Unity to a certain extent, internal strength, and "purification" to a certain degree, can undoubtedly be achieved by political activity. But the failure of India to accomplish all it has desired during the last four decades is due to the fact that political activity alone won't do for building a nation.

When however, all obstacles in the path of national growth and development have been removed, when unity is attained, and 'internal purification' is over, the only requisite for perfect national consolidation is strength and manliness, intensity of feeling and fiery resolve, or in a word, unflinching and adamant character.

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The history of India's past shows that religion gives the greatest motive power for service and good, and is the highest source of strength and builder of character. By religion is not meant the doctrines and dogmas, the ceremonials and rituals, but the essence behind them, the principles underlying the practice. Spirituality furnishes the bed-rock on which a nation can not only be built but also preserved for ever. Religion can give greater consciousness of strength in oneself, develop self-reliance, and foster the virtues of individual, civic and national life, more than anything else. The narrow sel-

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fishness of man which becomes manifest in ordinary life and actions cannot be removed, and he cannot be exhorted to a life of service for his community and country, if religion does not appeal to his nobler instincts and higher faculties and does not show him that the Great Way Beyond lies, not merely through meditation with a desire for self-illumination and individual emancipation, but also through selfless work and self-sacrifice for his fellow-men, which enable the clamour of the ego to be subdued to the call of the country and the people. Man-making and character-building ideas can be well disseminated by the establishment of several centres of spiritual thought and culture which can teach, by precept and example, the true ideals of life, the ways of civic and national elevation, and the methods of so organising and combining the civic and national elements that integrity and solidarity are created and kept up without any incompatibility with the higher principles and laws of life and humanity.

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The order of growth is from city to nationality and from nationality to humanity. India and some other Oriental countries stand in great need of rising as a power in the world, as self-respecting members in a comity of nations, whereas it is high time that several countries of the west which have already become nations give up their attempts at self aggrandisement by robbing each other and uniting amongst themselves to rob the others. India has to distribute her great cultural treasures to the world at large; she must therefore continue to live on as a nation. The Western nations have first to save themselves from extinction by widening their conceptions of nationality and the duties of a nation; they should refrain not only from ruining each other but also from ruining the East; they should live long and enable also the weaker nations to survive the shocks of time in order to serve humanity. For, the goal of all life, individual, civic or national, is the heart of humanity which is divinity. The life of the individual has its fulfilment in the life of the community; the life of the community in the life of the nation; and the life of the nation in the life of all mankind which is in reality one indivisible Whole —the *Virat*.

## PESSIMISM AND LIFE'S IDEAL : THE HINDU OUTLOOK AND A CHALLENGE

(*With a criticism of Life and an interpretation of History*)\*

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(*Continued from page 96*)

A thorough examination of Pessimism is absolutely necessary, as, otherwise, we shall not be able to understand the genius and spirit of the civilisation of India, nor shall we be able to ascertain truth for ourselves and life's aim and ideal. The most important problem for us is that presented by the conflicting claims of optimism, pessimism and meliorism, and *the most important question is how we feel life*. The determination of what is called the *values of life* in the modern philosophy of the West depends chiefly on the answer we give to this question of questions. Our "values" depend on our desires. What desire is agreeable and what desire disagreeable, what desire is to be cherished and what desire to be suppressed is the all-important question for mankind. Metaphysical problems like Monism, Dualism and Pluralism, theological problems like Mono-theism, Poly-theism, Pan-theism, Pan-entheism, or any other -ism based on mere intellect is nothing but intellectualism whose importance is secondary.

From what has already been said, it is clear that the message of *Mukti* and the hope of *Nirvana* notwithstanding, the religious and philosophical systems of India have been called pessimistic for the simple reason that their fundamental principle is that life is full of misery, the world is essentially an evil, being based as it is on the will to live and desire is the cause of human woe. We have also seen that the word 'Pessimism' is generally used in a condemnatory sense though no philosophy or religion of India conveys the message of despair, though no philosophy or religion of India has ever said that there is no hope for mankind, it is all blank here and hereafter and suicide is the only escape from the tangle. This definition of pessimism, both positive and negative, we must constantly keep before our mind, we must never depart from this sense in all that follows and I hope to conclusively prove

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that it is the only true view of life and therefore deserves no condemnation at all. Condemnation should rightly attach to optimism and meliorism.

A complete effacement of all pre-conceived notions is a condition precedent to the ascertainment of truth. "God is good and therefore His creation cannot be an evil" is an unwarranted assumption or a *priorism* run mad. A philosophy of religion or theology not based on the psychology of universal religious experience stands self-condemned. Whether God exists and whether He is good and whether if He is good the world also must be good is a matter about which any pre-conceived notion will preclude the possibility of the discovery of truth. The most important thing about life is experience, be it materialistic or spiritualistic. This experience springs primarily from feeling arising from sensation without which all cognition is simply impossible. If we feel, then only shall we be able to think and then to act. Suppose I happen to touch fire. The immediate result is the feeling of pain. Then the thought comes that fire burns and in consequence I so act as not to touch fire again.

In solving any great problem of life, this feeling is our chief guide. As Ruskin has truly said : "The ennobling difference between one man and another is precisely this—that one man feels more than another." A discussion without feeling for its basis is no better than logic-chopping and logomachy. It never appeals to any one and nobody has patience with it. If we try to understand the subject of this paper through feeling then only will it be possible for us to have a proper understanding. All the Indian systems of philosophy which influence our lives have their origin in feeling. As the author of *Sankhya-karika* says : *Dukha-trayabhighatai Jignasa tadavaghatake hetou* (all philosophical enquiry arises from the feeling of three kinds of pain—*adhyatmik* or, mental, *adhi-bhoutik* or physical and *adhi-daivic* or accidental, and the end of such enquiry is the radical extinction of pain).

Now the first question is whether the feeling from which pessimism arises is a universal experience or not ; secondly, whether it is possible to compile a statistical account from which by striking a balance between happiness and misery we can confidently assert that misery preponderates in life ; and thirdly, whether pessimism has a scientific basis at all.

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My answer to the first question is that the gay and the giddy being devoid of any depth of feeling should be left out of account. Their feeling has no value for life and so they cannot complain if I ignore them altogether. All that we can do is to turn to the founders of the great religions of the world and the saints and devout souls who live those religions, for, "*religion is the chief fact with regard to man.*" If we notice any agreement in the feelings of these great souls who are the salt of the earth, then I presume that it is safe to say that pessimistic feeling is a universal experience. I would rather not say anything particular about Mahommad but that there was a deep sorrow in his life—sorrow for himself and sorrow for his country is a truth about which there can be no difference of opinion. But, though I do not say anything particular about Mahommad, yet I can say most emphatically that the religion of the Moslem *Sufis* is the religion of Faquirs and Dervishes *par excellence* and nobody becomes a Faquir unless he is thoroughly convinced that the life of the world is an evil

“ Like to the apples on the Dead Sea shore,  
All ashes to the taste. ”

The religious and philosophical systems of the Hindus, Buddhists and Jains, the Tao-ism of the great La-o-tze of China, the Jew's religion of the Old Testament, and the Christian's religion of the New Testament are all pessimistic without an iota of doubt. The religion of the Avesta again is equally pessimistic, for if the Ahura Mazda of Zoroaster represents Heaven or the principle of good, his Ahriman represents the world or the principle of evil. Last of all, coming down to the small religious sects of the present day at home and abroad, we see that wherever there is a strong sense of sin and all the misery it brings in its train there is pessimism,—it matters very little whether the members of these sects would like to call themselves pessimists or not.

The second question is about statistics. My answer to this question is that such statistics are not possible. But that need not cause any exultation in the optimistic camp, for optimistic philosophy is not based on statistics either. If the optimists say that pessimism is dogmatic, environmental and temperamental, then we shall fling the charge in their face. That pessimism is nothing of the kind I shall show by and by. That it is not dogmatic but rational I shall establish on ethical

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proof and while marshalling the ethical proof I shall not only answer the third question about the scientific basis of pessimism but shall also show the unscientific character of optimism and meliorism alike.

To begin with, I maintain that pessimism, the logical consequence of which is absolute renunciation, is the foundation of all morality, that no ethical theory can be based on science and evolution and therefore the talk of the scientific basis of pessimism is the idlest conceivable. But if we view the question from the standpoint of science and evolution at all we clearly see that neither optimism nor meliorism has any scientific basis to stand upon, for science leads to pessimism in that sense in which the term is not used by any philosopher, Indian or European—the Indian equivalent is *dukha-vada*—and in which I have not used the term anywhere in the previous pages of my paper. Science leads to that pessimism which holds out no hope to mortals, to think of which is “to be full of sorrow and leaden-eyed despairs,” for science and evolution have nothing to say about the meaning of life, the aim and end of our existence.

The test of ethical life is the crucial test, and it is this test that I propose to apply to the subject of this paper. God or no God, a hereafter or no hereafter, the moment I find the ethical ideal I find the meaning and purpose of my life. My life then cannot be lived in vain.

If we look at the question from mere outside we shall not be able to obtain any satisfactory result. That which constitutes the manhood of man solves the problem of optimism and pessimism and solves the problem of life as well.

Where then lies the manhood of man? It lies in striving after a better life, in becoming and being, in creative art,—and the highest man is he who is passion-free, who loves all and is master of himself. If we try to get to the bottom of this striving, we are bound to admit that the root-cause of all such endeavour is nothing but discontent with things as they are. Even material progress arises from a sense of necessity and necessity is the mother of inventions. The progress achieved in science and art is due to a sense of want and social and political progress in the true sense of the term is inconceivable without social and political discontent. All this is not pessimism strictly speaking, but a sense of necessity, a sense of want and the feeling of discontent are the chief ingredients

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e pessimistic feeling, though pessimism, rightly understood, concerns moral and spiritual life alone and it is to this life that other departments of life must be subordinated according to the Pessimist. It is by the moral standard therefore that we shall judge pessimism, for it is moral value that is supreme and human civilisation is meaningless without the moral basis to support it. The talk of progress without morality is a provoking cant. Science without conscience is an unmitigated evil and political and industrial greatness at the expense of others is the gravest wrong to humanity. It is the cause of untold woe.

The pessimist's emphasis is on the moral value but he does not believe in a millennium. Yet he does his duty all the same, for he knows that "to work alone he has the right and not to the fruits thereof." He does his duty better than those who desire success but he does not make a fetish of activism and work, for he knows how to reconcile the claims of activism and quietism, the *Karma* and *Naishnarmya* of the *Bhagavad-Gita*. Infinite rest at the heart of infinite action—such is his conception of life. Quadrumanous activity that disturbs the repose of the soul and brings all our woe and a brutal lethargy, the peace of death he equally abhors. He knows the world as it is and does not expect from it any permanent good. The world sometimes becomes better and sometimes worse. It becomes better sometimes not by reason of itself but in spite of itself—by reason of the force that acts against it. Says Lord Sri Krishna : "As often as righteousness will decline and unrighteousness will raise its head, *so often* will I verily incarnate Myself." No millennial or melioristic hope this—for here is a clear recognition of alteration in the triumph of good and in the triumph of evil in the affairs of men—a vicious circle again. That this is the right view supported by history I shall show as I proceed. The pessimist has no delusion. The fool's paradise is not for him.

Pessimism in its relation to the ethical ideal, moral life or the life of conscience is an all-important question. The Sanskrit name for the moral law is *dharma* and *dharmabuddhi* is the Sanskrit equivalent of conscience, though the word *dharma* has other meanings as well.

Now, what is this moral life, this life of conscience and where is its origin ? That a higher moral life has evolved from a lower life of morality I readily admit, but what I do

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not admit is that morality has evolved from non-morality at all. The gap between the organic and the non-organic, the mechanical and the vital may or may not be filled, but what can never be filled is the gap between the merely vital and the moral. Morality can have evolved from morality only. What has evolved must have existed in an involved or imperfect state. Where there is no involution there can be no evolution. How can that evolve which never was ? But because morality has evolved therefore it does not follow that it will go on evolving *ad infinitum*. This is not science but Hegel all over. *Infinite possibility is a Hegelian fiction*. Not only has it no proof but it is a contradiction in terms and Hegel knew it. But what terror has contradiction for Hegel ? As a deft magician waves his wand and says : " Hey, Presto Pass ! " so Hegel mutters his formula of Identity in contradiction.

That there can be no evolution without involution, that ' variation ' does not drop from the clouds and evolution cannot go on *ad infinitum* is a truth which may be regarded as a very great contribution of Swami Vivekananda to the philosophic thought of the modern world. It is the Swami's re-statement of a very old truth in the terms of modern science. *Jat-yantaro Parinama Prakriya purat* (transmutation of species through the infilling of Nature) is an aphorism of Patanjali I have not seen interpreted in this way by any one else. The law of evolution with the involution it presupposes is a very old law, but in its modern form it is the result of biological research. That Hegelianism at one time became the dominant philosophy of the West is due to its doctrine of development. The fancied harmony in the system between the Absolute on the one hand and science and evolution on the other commended this system to many, and the Westernised Hindus are still chewing the cud of Hegelian philosophy. A very poor Absolute indeed ! I can very well understand why the Pragmatist of to-day laughs at Hegel's Absolute and calls it a Zero. The abolition of such an Absolute does not make the least difference in our life. For the true Absolute we must come to the Vedanta philosophy of Hindustan.

Evolution as it is now understood is the result of biological research, but I am afraid the data of Biology do not support the theory of infinite progress. All scientific men admit that the world will some day come to an end and not a vestige of what we call progress will survive the shock of time. According to Huxley who believes not only in gradual progress but

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also in progress *per saltum*, Evolution means not only a movement forward but a movement backward as well. Geologists are of opinion that a glacial age may come again and then, adaptation to environment being a condition of evolution, the highest forms of life will perish and the lowest forms endure. These lowest forms will then be the fittest and it is they, therefore, that will survive. The fittest of Biology is not only *not* fittest in the intellectual and moral sense but in the sense of physical strength as well. That the course of human life and human history is not rectilinear but curvilinear is a more reasonable supposition. Swami Vivekananda is quite right when he says mathematically that a straight line infinitely produced is a circle. He has also given examples from the histories of philosophy and science. There can be no forward movement of philosophy after the conception of absolute unity has been reached. Conservation of energy is the last generalisation of science. When the so-called elements of chemistry will be reduced to one, the progress of Chemistry in the true sense of the term must come to an end. The ancient Hindu philosophy like the philosophy of ancient Greece supports this curvilinear movement, this cyclical movement, this law of rise and fall, fall and rise, *Srishti* and *laya*, *laya* and *Srishti*, chaos after cosmos, cosmos after chaos, through endless time, through all eternity. A vicious circle again we must get out of ! Infinite rectilinear forward movement has absolutely no proof. We may very well call it the poet's fancy or the philosopher's fiction.

It has become necessary for me to say so much about evolution because I know many people who derive infinite satisfaction from the thought of relativity in the moral world. Their study of Biology and Sociology has led them to the belief that morality is something like an epi-phenomenon of life and so much should not be made of it. I speak from personal experience and I speak in sorrow. Morality is a fact not to be made light of. The greatest philosopher of modern Europe, I believe, was Kant and Kant uttered a great truth when he said : "Two things fill me with wonder—the starry sky without and the moral principle within." The starry sky without every one can understand but the moral principle within is not quite so clear to many. There is nothing more mysterious in the in the universe than the dawn of moral sense in man. It is nowhere visible in Nature. Nature means the instinct of self-

preservation. Nature means reproduction of the species. Nature means struggle for existence. To lie and to rob may very often be a "biological necessity," for that is quite natural, but morality is the very reverse of this. The first terms of morality, as we conceive it, are self-restraint and truth, the second terms justice and chivalry, the third and last terms *ahimsa* and loving service of man. *Morality is a protest against Nature. Morality is anti-natural or unnatural, but whatever is anti-natural is not necessarily moral.* As Herbert Spencer raised the fabric of his ethical theory on the foundation of spontaneous evolution, Huxley his contemporary and a greater biologist than he smashed it to atoms with the sledge-hammer blow dealt in his ablest work as a thinker, *Evolution and Ethics*. That this lecture has caused sleeplessness to many appears from the following remarks in the *International Journal of Ethics* of January, 1925, page 191, where in connection with Mr. William McDougall's latest book *Ethics and Some Modern World Problems*, the reviewer says : "When in 1893 Mr. McDougall read Huxley's famous Romanes lecture pointing out the disharmony . . . . . between evolution and ethics, he received a severe moral shock, followed by deep depression, and from that shock and depression he has never wholly recovered." Huxley's *Evolution and Ethics* does not cause the least surprise to the pessimists. It does not cause the least depression to them. On the contrary it fills them with joy, for they see that Huxley has here told the bare truth and nothing but truth. Only what they do not understand is the unfounded melioristic hope he holds out in the closing pages of his book—a hope that does not follow from his premisses. Huxley is not garrulous like Herbert Spencer and is very cautious in his generalisations, but in spite of the slight inconsistency just noticed the few things he has said have pith and marrow in them. He proves to a demonstration that morality cannot be explained by the biological law. He says with all the emphasis he can command that *Ethical process is diametrically opposed to the Cosmic process*. Cosmic process means that which is spontaneously going on and therefore unnatural. This gulf between *is* and *ought*, this gulf between the outer world and the inner world, or in the language of James, this "disjunction" is a fact which refuses to be blinked. Where then is Hegel's Block-universe ? Through what feat of dialectic, through what prestidigital skill can he bridge this yawning

gulf ? It will not do to say : " Die to live, " specially when " to die, " according to Hegel, does not mean " to die altogether to the world of sense, " when " to die " does not mean, according to him, " to lose oneself *completely* to save oneself. " An epigram is not a solution. If " to die to live " is a truth as a true Christian understands it—as a true Hindu understands it,—then philosophy must show how it is possible.

No philosophy can show it, but it is a fact. Kant as an honest philosopher knew it and that is why he made no attempt to reconcile the world with his categorical imperative. The gulf between his Pure Reason and Practical Reason is due to this. The Vedantist knows it. That is how *Maya-vāda* comes in. *Maya-vāda* is no explanation but a mere statement of fact. *Maya* is *anirvachya* or that which cannot be explained, about which nothing can be affirmed or denied but *which has got to be rejected by all means* and therefore there is no harm in calling it a cosmic illusion or something that is false. In the words of Swami Vivekananda, "The Hindu is frank. He says, ' I do not know how the world is, no cause-and-effect philosophy can explain it, but I *do* know how to get out of it, and get out of it we must. ' " I have not quoted the Swami *verbatim*, but this is the sense of what he has said. No agnosticism this, but this is all we need to know before we want to know anything more. This is the A, B, C, of the Vedanta philosophy.

There is no way out of *Maya-vāda* and I cannot help accepting it, for a great disjunction there is and it cannot be explained away. If the block-universe of Hegel is unacceptable, the pluralism and multi-verse of James is equally unacceptable. But this is a large subject and not within the scope of this paper.

*Maya-vāda* has been generally approached from the intellectual stand-point. In modern times Swami Vivekananda has approached the subject from the ethical point of view in his lectures on Jnana Yoga and Practical Vedanta, and Max Muller has said that ethics is at the beginning, ethics is in the middle and ethics at the end of the Vedanta philosophy. If our Professors of Philosophy instead of trying in vain to bring the Vedanta into line with Hegelianism, concentrate their attention on a systematic ethical exposition of *Maya-vāda*, the negative aspect of the Vedanta, then they will be earning the gratitude of the country and doing a real service to the world.

In the traditional interpretation of *Maya-vada*, the ethical element is implicit. A complete ethical proof was not considered necessary owing to the prevailing belief that nobody was entitled to the study of the Vedanta unless he had cultivated to the fullest possible extent *Vairagya* or the spirit of detachment. But now that *Vairagya* itself has been called into question by the so-called reformers, æstheticians and politicians of our country, a very full ethical proof of *Maya-vada* has become absolutely necessary. I shall show later on that our social reformers, æstheticians and politicians have nothing to fear from the spirit of *Vairagya*, for their pet interests will not suffer at all, but on the contrary, these interests will be promoted.

KAMAKHYANATH MITRA, M. A.

(To be continued)

# THE PROBLEM OF CREATION.

BY

M. H. SYED, B. A., L. T.

The problem of creation is one of the most disputed points in Indian philosophy. The opponents of this theory say that nothing could come out of nothing. If all the universe is created by a Mighty Being, He must also have been created by some other being higher than Himself and so on. Thus there is no end to this process and the all-round perfection and true greatness of the first cause become doubtful.

The believers in the Parinama-Vada theory allege that the universe is self-existent and was never created. It is an emanation from, or manifestation of, the one and the only Reality that is perpetual, eternal, ancient and unborn.

As the heat of the sun causes the water of the ocean to rise in vapour which, becoming cloud, again falls on the earth in the form of rain and flows back to the ocean, so the whole universe with its multifarious forms and lives, is manifested by the Divine Mind and so again merges into Him.

The plants and trees grow from the earth, minerals are dug out from mines in the earth ; and when the plants and the minerals, or the rocks from which they were taken, decay and disintegrate they are assimilated and absorbed by the earth in the mineral kingdom and are needed for the nourishment of its soil. So from the one the many appear, and after a time they are again dissolved into the primeval essence.

Man is nourished by, and lives upon, animal and vegetable food. In the ordinary course of evolution, the mineral forms vegetables which in their turn are consumed by animals for their sustenance. In the same way man uses both vegetable and animal forms for his consumption. When a man's dead body is dissolved into various elements, the totality of these elements is thereby increased. Thus the whole process of evolution is based on mutual self-sacrifice and love. There is strictly speaking, no increase or diminution in anything or in any form. Both matter and spirit, from the combination of which the whole outer existence is manifested, are proven, beyond the shadow of a doubt, to be utterly indestructible. The many, matter, is the outcome of the One, Spirit. In other words, the One reveals itself as the many, but is ever the same.

M. H. SYED, B. A., L. T.

## THE MESSAGE OF MUSIC

M. R. RY. ARCOT SWAMINATHA AIYAR AVL., B. A.

**T**HE simplest idea conveyed by music is that it is an art that employs sound as the medium of artistic expression, and music is one of the fine arts which appropriates the phenomena of sound to the purposes of poetry and has a province of its own in many respects analagous to, but yet distinct, from the other arts such as literature, sculpture, painting and architecture. Literature describes emotions or perceptions, sculpture imitates the outward forms of animated beings and physiagnomically, either in the face or in the moulding and attitude of the entire figure, displays personal character and the effect of passion upon it, while painting vitalises into colour the forms of sculpture and gives the nobility of life to those forms.

On the other hand, music embodies the inward feelings of which the other arts can but exhibit the outward effect and is thus capable of suggesting more than it displays. This quality places music on the highest level of art excellence and has the merit of serving the purpose of a universal language by suggesting the inward meaning of the outward expressions of sculpture, painting or architecture. In this respect, music serves the highest purpose of art which is primarily the giving of pleasure to man in his several stages of physical and mental development from cradle to the grave. By its soothing influence music lulls to sleep the little innocents and brings peace in the nursery. From the earliest ages song has been the sweet companion of labour. Every trade, every occupation has long had its special music. But the purpose of music is not confined simply to the giving of pleasure to the senses. It is also the means whereby the individual is enabled to put himself in harmonious relationship with the larger life of which he is a part. Music seeks to get the individual not merely in touch with the outer world but with the supra world. As a recent writer has said, music, if it should serve the purpose of true art, should be based on nature's laws and should be part of nature's rhythm and in this respect music is essentially life, teaching the harmony which is life. It was Burritt, I think, who said that of all the liberal arts music has the greatest

influence over the passions, and among the instrumentalities of love and peace, surely, there can be no sweeter, softer, more effective voice than the gentle peace-breathing music.

One can, therefore, understand why the world's greatest thinkers, seers and prophets have characterised music as the medicine of afflicted mind, a kind of unfathomable speech which leads us to the Infinite. Truly, it is the art of the prophets, the art that can calm the agitation of the soul. As the bridge between the material and the spiritual life, between the seen and the unseen, music may claim to be one of the greatest gifts of God to man.

Poetry and music unite in song, and poets have attributed to music visible influence even over animate nature.

“The rude sea grew civil at her song  
And certain stars shot madly from their spheres  
To hear the sea-maid's music.”

It is well known that serpents are fascinated by music. The earliest musical compositions that we know of are the songs of the *Rik* (Rig Veda), addressed to *Agni*—the messenger from man to God, the mediator between them, to *Indra*—the mighty Lord of the Thunderbolt, with which he rends asunder the dark clouds, so that the heavenly rays and waters may descend to bless and fertilise the earth. The brilliant Sun God is besought for light and warmth that seeds and flocks may thrive in gladsome prosperity. Later, *Agni* or Fire whose place is on the earth, *Vayu* or *Indra* whose places are in mid-air and *Surya* who rules the sky come to have a different significance and Vedic Gods are conceived as terrestrial, aerial, and celestial which apparently meant no more than that the manifestations of divine power in nature may be traced back to three centres of force, one in the sky, one in the air and one on the earth. The *Riks* of the Rig Veda contain indelible traces of how the poet in man opens out a vista of grandeur and sublimity, a sense of sweetness and sincerity in which he plays the role of an humble and cheerful devotee. The Vedic Aryan approaches his gods with meek, yet cheerful submission, intertwines them with his own self and gathers strength. Many a hymn may be cited to show how the spirit of submission to the Divine Will operated as the factor in his scheme of life. As his intellectual horizon widens, we find his view of life becoming more and more speculative and his mind yearns in

search of some thing beyond what he has been accustomed to see or to conceive. The unfolding and perfecting of the human self becomes the greatest problem of man. To merge in one indivisible unity the spirit of man, the spirit of nature, and the spirit of God was the supreme achievement of the Rishis who sang the immortal Upanishads. And we find in one of the early Upanishads the question set forth almost in the same words as it appears in the writings of the Greek philosophers, or the Chinese philosophers or the philosophers of modern Europe,—questions which must have been asked for thousands of years—Whence are we born ? Whither are we going ? The emanation of the human self from the Infinite and its final return to the Infinite became the theme of the speculations of the poet Rishis.

To the great mass of mankind such speculations can be of no avail and to these the great epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata came as a welcome relief and served as the vehicle through which was conveyed the new message of the godly and heroic in human relations. The story of the origin of the composition of the Ramayana is significant. As Valmiki walked through the forests he marked with pleasure the happy sights and sounds around him, the playful animals, the merry birds, and as he was watching a pair of *Kraunchas* sporting with each other, a fowler shot one of the harmless birds and the hen-bird fluttered round her dying mate uttering piercing cries. Then Valmiki out of pity and love cried. The words fell into the form of a *sloka*, musical and sonorous, and Brahma appearing to the sage bade him tell the story of Rama in that melodious measure. Thus from a heart of love and pity was born the melody of the Ramayana and wherever it is chanted these qualities still find birth. It is in the Puranas in which were carried to a degree of nicety the tendencies of the great epics, that the old Hinduism of feeling and fervour re-asserted itself. The Puranas which in the earlier phases of evolution were confined to the development of Bhakti gave an impetus to the *Stotras* (devotional hymn lyrics) which have vied in intensity of feeling and sincerity of purpose with the earlier hymns of the Rig Veda. Speaking of the value of these devotional songs for the spiritual development of man, Dr. Keith has stated : “ We may justly recognise that there remained often a field in which much could be accomplished of universal appeal and abiding worth, and that in richness and beauty of form and sound, Sanskrit presented a medium



worthy of the highest flight to which any poet could soar." The manner of expression in form and metre, in rhythm and cadence has, as truly observed by Prof. Sivaprasad Buttachariar in the *Indian Historical Quarterly*, nowhere been so successful and charming as in this form of literature. The classical Sanskrit has acquired an attractive form in and through them; rhythm and alliteration, the intricate niceties of versification, the principle of symmetry of external harmony standing as the background of internal serenity and sweetness are there in all their simplicity. And if the claim of the *Śāstras* for literary recognition rests on their artistic expression, it rests no less on the charm and sentiments contained in them. In assessing the value of this form of literature, especially in its later development in which the appropriate *ragas* and *talas* were set to the compositions as in the *Gita Govinda* of Jayadeva, we have to take into account the prevailing tendencies of the ordinary man and the trend of his mind. To whatever school of thought or creed the Indian may belong, the populace—not the intellectuals who revelled in the higher reaches of philosophic thought—were and are profoundly influenced by those devotional songs. One can imagine the results that could be achieved by the foregathering of devoted people stimulated to unusual spiritual energy by the performances of the great master-pieces. Indian music especially is peculiarly suited to produce this effect on the mass mind. Dr. Kuno Francke, Professor Emertius and Honorary Curator of the Germanic Museum at Harvard University, who has had especial opportunity of studying the effect of Indian classical devotional songs at close quarters, has recorded a well-deserved praise which I make no apology for quoting :—

"Indian music is only another richer and fuller expression of Indian wisdom. He who wishes to understand it must have realised his own self, must know that the individual is only a fleeting tone in the great world symphony, that nothing can be isolated, and that every objective existence is only the glimpse of a moment in the current of mysterious overflowing life. He must know that all phenomena are only a reflection of the Invisible Being and that our redemption lies in anchoring our consciousness in this Being."

Truth has no boundaries, and is beyond the limitations of race and colour. There is music in every heart and when the master musicians of the world have sought to invoke the aid of music to realise the Infinite, they spoke not for one race or creed but for all mankind. There is in souls a

sympathy with sounds, some chord in unison with what we hear is pouched within us and the heart replies. There is a harmony between the constitution of man and that of nature and whatever is most perfect (*i. e.*, beautiful) in the outer world excites the most perfect and delightful emotion in the soul of man. And when Divine music touches this chord, we seem to have a new freedom, a new extension of our personality, a yearning for the realisation of the larger Self. We seem to have a vision of the world-harmony, the Divine Dominion of Love's Empire and a new conception of brotherhood. This is the Message of Music and because this is the Message also of Bhagavan Sri Krishna, His teachings have been called the *Bhagavad Gita*, or the Lord's *Song*.

ARCOT SWAMINATHA AIYAR, B. A.

## EXPANSION OF THE SELF\*

SWAMI TRIGUNATITANANDA

**W**E have not come here to live a worldly life ; a worldly life does not give entire satisfaction. We have come to gain more. To-day we are satisfied, to-morrow our desires increase.

The higher world is a world of improvement, of growth, of expansion within and without. And the secret of expansion is renunciation. We cannot expand or improve unless we give up.

To-day we have certain opinions, but we cannot expand unless we let them go. We must be dissatisfied with present conditions ; but that dissatisfaction is for further improvement. It is not a worldly dissatisfaction but a divine discontent which heralds growth.

Every year we renounce one year of life ; yes, every moment even, and unless we renounce that, we cannot grow. That is the secret of growth.

An author writes a book ; the next edition he revises and brings out. Otherwise, it would not be an evidence of his work or growth. His dissatisfaction is helpful to his growth, and not wrong.

We must go through unhappiness and unfavourable conditions in order to go beyond them. Such conditions are temporary. If we did not know darkness, we would not know light. It is not that the unfavourable conditions are good ; they are only as steps to higher happiness which in turn gives place to happiness still higher.

More and still more illumination is what we want ; not staying at one point. No matter, however satisfactory our conditions may be, we must still keep on growing. That is the road toward the Infinite : by rising above the present, by renouncing the present, we can march along that road. It does not mean that the present is not right, but is a step in growth.

To-day, our idea of God may be a relative one. He answers prayers, etc. ; to-morrow, when we would grow, our

\*From notes of a lecture by the Swami in the Hindu Temple, San Francisco, California, U. S. A.

idea of God will evolve. Again, prayer in the beginning may be possible with great effort: but later it will become as easy and inevitable as a natural law.

Renunciation may be a matter of sorrow, of worry and anxiety to many persons. But if that giving up is for some higher purpose, that is called the right renunciation. It is not out of fear, not out of poverty, but out of desire to gain higher things.

The way is not to be afraid of misery, of troubles; we must not stop at one point. Let the present be left behind; then the Infinite will be nearer and will present itself in a fuller view.

The main thing is to cultivate and strengthen sincerity. If it is genuine, we cannot but advance.

We worry ourselves, we think prosperity will not smile on us, we fear that health will not be ours. Let ill health come as much as it can, yet we should not weaken the higher aspect of the mind. Let the body, and the lower aspect of the mind, and conditions of the world, take care of themselves!

How to expand the Self? By pessimism? To expand we have to go through this worldly phase of life. We are cowards! We do not realise we have been sent here for discipline. Unless we pass through this, we cannot reach the plane of peace.

Those who have attained internal peace have gone through this discipline, and they know their life is eternal. Externally also they keep themselves in peace, so as not to disturb social and worldly conditions. They are free.

Expansion means freedom. The more the resistance you stand, the greater will be your strength for expansion. Only we must watch, and not forget the secret.

If we get a piece of candy in this world, we forget all our promises and vows. We give up everything for that little comfort of life. We go to own it; it buys us as slaves and we too want to remain as slaves to it.

That is the mischief: that owning. And we cannot go further. We cannot go beyond the ideas and experiences which result from it.

If for a long time we be in one condition, say, happiness, we get tired of that experience. To-day we are happy; tomorrow we are tired of it, and we do not get objects of higher enjoyments.

It is not that we have to quit the very objects of enjoyment, but the idea of enjoyment should be improvement. That is the idea of expansion of the self.

We have come from a place of unity to a place of variety. And if we go on expanding ourselves, we finally reach to unity again. Unity which is the goal of expansion is not to be given up, but kept up for eternity. We go from concrete to abstract. What is concrete is less expansive ; what is abstract is of a more expansive nature.

If you spread yourself out by identifying yourself with all creation, that is expansion of self. If you entertain the idea of owning, saying, " This is mine, " it is misery.

Our renouncing is a negation ; but when we negate one thing ,it is for the sake of something higher. Every negation or renouncement we make gives us a positive advancement. Ignorant negation causes obstruction.

If we get tired of one condition of life, we must not give it up until we have gained the full benefit from it. If we do not undo our karma for which we ourselves are responsible, we shall have to suffer.

We must see whether we have properly outgrown that stage or condition. We may again have those conditions of life which we want to renounce in expanded form, even as we ourselves have expanded. We shall again and again come across those conditions until we shall eventually rise above them.

So we rise through pessimism to optimism. It is not sophistry to say that God is all-knowing, that He is taking care of us. We do not see that Truth, that is all.

If we renounce the selfish self, we shall expand the Real Self. By improving our own self, we can improve others by and by.

Why do we not have recourse to so much of prayer, ritual, etc. ? Because it disturbs the mind which quietly worships God. It must have time to analyse its own nature.

We must stand on our own legs; we must surely realise success which is our birthright ! If a slight degree of fear is allowed to come in, we shall be overpowered.

God is the Dispenser and the conditions are God-sent. If we are not afraid of unfavourable conditions, they will be overcome. If you can boldly meet them once, the next time you

will meet them more easily and the third time they will be nothing.

To make hardship less severe is to face it with strength. That is man's life. Man wants to conquer and God has given the power for it.

If God is perfect, and He made us, how can we who are imperfect come from Him ? And how can we demonstrate that God has given His children the scope to make themselves equal to Him in power and perfection ?

Take the science of the eye, for instance: when the eyesight is imperfect, man makes an improvement. So God gives man the chance to make this improvement. A teacher often gives a wrong question or sentence to test the student. It is not that the teacher does not know.

So we are given a chance for improvement. And the lesson we learn from expansion is to give up, not externally, but internally, the narrow selfish ideas, and thus rise from worldly ideas to the life of peace and bliss.

SWAMI TRIGUNATITANANDA.

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## GLEANINGS

### THE MUHAMMADAN VAISHNAVA SAINTS OF MEDIAEVAL BENGAL

The power of expansion and assimilation possessed by Hinduism is shown by the deep influence of Sri Chaitanya and his movement on Muslims in Mediæval Bengal. The following is taken from the *Indian Social Reformer* :—

Mr. S. N. Dhar, M. A., Professor of History, Holkar College, Indore, writes in the course of an article in the *United India and Indian States* :—

Of Muhammadans who became Vaishnavas during the life-time of Chaitanya, the foremost was *Hari Das* who hailed from a village in the district of Jessore in Bengal. It appears that Chaitanya who enjoined on all men faith in *Hari* and the uttering of his name, did never regard a Muhammadan as impure or inferior, nor did he revile the great religion of Islam. In the memorable interview between the two men on the sea-beach at Puri, Hari Das, who had come all the way from Bengal to have a *darshan* of the Master, fell weeping at his feet, saying that he was an impure Muslim and so doomed for ever. The great Saint lovingly embraced Hari Das, and praised his spiritual yearning, but gave him a mild rebuke in the following words :—"For nothing you deify yourself, Haridas, and your religion. I myself do not possess the purity of your pure religion."

This great Muhammadan Vaishnava died at Puri, enjoying up to the very last moment, when breath actually failed him, the supreme felicity of having his Master, and his followers before his closing eyes. Then rose Chaitanya, and carrying the corpse of Hari Das, began singing and dancing in divine ecstasy. This continued for sometime when *Svarup Gosain* brought Chaitanya back to his senses. They carried the coffin to the sea, and bathed it in its water. "The sea has now become a great Tirtha," said Chaitanya. They then dipped his (Hari Das's) toe in water, which they drank with great respect. They besmeared his body with sandal-paste and wrapped it in costly clothes. His grave was dug in the beach, the corpse was placed in it, and Chaitanya filled it with sand with his own hands. Such was the honour and love inspired by a great Muhammadan Vaishnava.\*

Hardly inferior to Hari Das in reputation among the Vaishnavas and greater than he in their influence on the moulding of the dogmas of Vaishnavism, were the remarkable brothers Dabir and Khas, two (converted) Muhammadan ministers of the King of Bengal. As *Rup* and *Sanatan* the great *Gosains* as they were styled, they became the most important figures in the Vaishnava society after the demise of the Master. At the behest of Chaitanya, Sanatan took up his abode at Brindaban, where, after a year, Rup also joined him after giving away their vast property to their relations. Together they spread the teachings of the Master, and composed books in Sanskrit and Bengali languages,† which are still read daily by pious Vaishnavas. In a great work, called the

\*This account of the burial of Hari Das is taken from the *Chaitanya Charitamrita* by Krishnadas Kaviraj, composed between 1615 and 1616 A. D. It is a work of outstanding scholarship, and is second only to the *Chaitanya-Bhagavata* as an authority on the biography of the Master.

† A list is given in the *Chaitanya-Charitamrita*.

*Itaribhaktivilas*, Sanatan regulated the conduct of the Vaishnavas, and explained the cardinal principles of Vaishnavism. Rup was a poet and scholar, and he composed two mystic dramas in Sanskrit, named the *Lalita-Madhavam*, and the *Vidagdha-Madhavam*, which are based on the amours of Radha and Krishna. His other works are the *Ujjwala Nilamani*, and *Dana Kelikaumudi*, etc. Their nephew, *Jiva Goswami* was perhaps the greatest scholar of the age. His great work, the *Shat-Sandarbha* (that is the six articles,) is the greatest Veda of the Vaishnavas.

The Vaishnava mystics of mediæval Bengal are noted for the exquisite charm of their style,—the beauty and elevation of thought, and the music of their rhythm. The Muhammadan converts to Vaishnavism are in no way inferior to their Hindu brethren in the matchless way in which they handled the traditional Hindu legends of the love of Radha and Krishna. In the anthologies of Vaishnava verses, called *Padavalis*, many of which are still extant, the reader is startled to find the names of Muhammadans who had become Vaishnavas, and who, in matchless style, have expressed their appreciation of the solace derived from the contemplation of the love of Radha and Krishna. In depth of fervour as well as earnestness of manner, in the loftiness of the flight of their imagination as well as grace and loveliness of composition, there is nothing to distinguish these Muhammadan *padavalis* from those composed by the best Hindu Vaishnava poets.

Recent research in the field of mediæval Bengali literature has yielded as many as 45 names of these Muhammadan mystics, who composed poems on Radha and Krishna. In Rai Sahib Dinesh Chandra Sen's great work, the *Fanga Sahitya-Parichaya*, the names of eleven Muhammadan poets are given together with a few representative poems of each. They are Alwal, Salweg, Kabir, Sekhlal, Fatan, Bhikan, Ali Raja, Akbar Shah, Nasir Mahmud, Habib and Saiyad Martuza. The last named was born in the middle of the sixteenth century in a village in the Murshidabad district of Bengal and died at the age of eighty at a place called Chhapghati, where his tomb still exists and is venerated by Hindus and Muhammadans. His family came from Barielly in U. P. It is now held that there was a second Saiyad Martuza, who came from Chittagong, and was also a Vaishnava poet.

About Ali Raja, only this much is known that he translated into Bengali a Persian work, named the *Siraj-Kulup*, and also published an original work named the *Dhyamala* besides numerous Vaishnava poems. He too came from Chittagong. Alwal composed a great work called the *Pudma-vat*. Nothing is known as to the biography of the other poets.

#### SANSKRIT IN PERSIAN AND ARABIC LITERATURE

We have it on record that during the Khalifate of Al-Mamun (born 786 A. D.) the famous son of Haroun-al-Rashid, whose times are known as the Golden Age in the history of the Muhammadans, a sound knowledge of Sanskrit was possessed by some of the Alumni of his Court. Al-Mamun held at his Court religious conferences for the discussions of the several systems of Hindu Philosophy and to make comparative study of them with reference to Islamic philosophy. It would appear that some Indian medical treatises in Sanskrit were translated into Arabic in his Court, the well-known Sanskrit works

on medicine, Charaka and Susruta, having been translated into Arabic ere this. Two Hindu Vaidyas held appointments as body-physicians at the Court of Haroun-al-Rashid. Some books on astronomy, astrology, music, agriculture, etc., were translated from Sanskrit into Arabic in the time of these Khalifs. The great Emperor Akbar, though not a scholar himself, had made his Court an Academy, and as a great patron of literature had collected a number of books, which included several Sanskrit works, and had a number of them translated into Arabic, among these being the Mahabharata and the Ramayana, the Atharva Veda, Yoga Vasishtha and the Hari Vamsa. We are indebted to this illuminating contribution by Mr. Jivanji Jamshedji Modi published in the *Annals of the Bhandarkar Institute* (Vol. VI, Part II) for these interesting particulars.

### RELIGIOUS TOLERATION

The principle underlying the need for unity and co-operation between the Hindus and Muslims in India, and between different religions and creeds in general, is humorously expressed by the following anecdote which appears in the *Maha Sakti* :—

His Majesty Ranjit Singh was in the habit of making a daily round in the city of Lahore, the capital of his Kingdom, to enable people to approach him personally with their grievances. One day the Hindu residents of a certain Mohulla in the city, led by their Choudhries, complained that the *Azan* (evening call to prayer) in the mosque in their Mohulla clashed with the *Arati* in their temple and therefore ought to be stopped. The Maharaja thereupon called all the Mohammedan residents of the Mohulla with their Mullahs to his presence and said :—"The Hindus here complain against your *Azan* as interfering with their *Arati*. Will you please tell me the object of your *Azan*?" "Sire, it is a call to the Faithful to meet in the mosque for prayer," replied the chief Mullah. "Personally" said His Majesty, addressing both the Hindus and the Mohammedans, "I see no difference between this and that Religion more than between this and that path leading to the same goal. No true lover of God and his Religion ought to, though the wise have rightly advised every one to stick to his or her own path to avoid confusion. Religious toleration is the teaching of the Hindu scriptures which you Hindus, including my humble self, devoutly obey. It is also the teaching of Guru Nanak, whom I profess to follow and you Hindus revere as much as I do. Religious toleration is also the first duty of a King. But as a King it is also my duty to listen to public complaints and to do justice if I can. Now the complaint of the Hindus is that you Mohammedans interfere with their *Arati* by your *Azan*. I order that from this day your *Azan* be stopped. But since the Mohammedans have got a Religion of their own and have got to follow it for their salvation, their religious practices cannot be stopped. And since the only object of the *Azan* is to call the Mohammedans within the reach of its sound to prayer in the mosque, and since it has been stopped in this Mohulla in response to the complaint of the Hindu residents, I order that from this day the Hindu residents of the locality make it a duty of their own every evening to go to the houses of their Mohammedan neighbours and call them to prayer in the mosque."

The Hindus said in a chorus that they would rather have their Mohammadan neighbours shout their *Azans* as loud as they could than go through the botheration of knocking at their doors every evening to remind them that the time for somebody's prayer and somebody else's punishment had come. If there was something more to be said it could not be said in the roar of laughter which followed, and in which His Majesty heartily joined, and which ended in the Hindus and the Mohammadans present throwing themselves into each other's arms and dancing like children amidst sky lifting cries of "Ram Rahim ki jai !"

#### CHRISTIANITY AND CIVILISATION

Writing in *The Nineteenth Century Review* on the place of Christianity as a constructive moral element in the civilisation of to-day, Mr. Reginald F. Rynd observes :—

How the current of human impulse is to be reversed, and the egotism of to-day is to be replaced by the altruism of a new and genuinely Christian social outlook constitutes the supreme problem of the moment. But it certainly cannot be done by the mere 'application' of Christian principle to our social institutions in the mass. It can only be done by a realization of those spiritual values which must replace the material values now in the ascendant, by weaning men from the pursuit of 'meat that perisheth' and teaching them to seek the only true nourishment of the soul. It is true that we have a society in existence whose task it is to keep alive the spark of faith and restore man to his lost heritage, viz., the Church ; but the Church is herself so committed to the current philosophy of life that in her attempts to create a new order of things she is like a man who is sawing away the branch of a tree he is sitting on, or whose only hope of freedom lies in his destroying the building that shelters him.

Moreover, we shall never rally men to the standard of institutional religion so long as the Church fails to put the faith that inspires her into a more logical and coherent form than the one she now presents for their acceptance. Among the many discordant voices all clamouring to be heard, which is the true one which most faithfully represents the spirit and method of Jesus ?

We shall never reach society except through the individual. A new social order will arise when man demands it, or rather when man is prepared to abandon the 'beggarly elements' of a world whose only criterion of truth is expediency and to guide his path by the only light that can lead him back to the security he seeks.

*The Atlantic Monthly* has a contribution from the pen of Rev. Reinhold Niebuhr on a similar theme. He is of opinion that organised religion flourishes in the U. S. A., because

"In our paradise of national security and universal opulence, we have not yet felt the enormity of the sins of greed and violence which are corrupting our civilisation and which seem to prove the impotence of religion..... the gospel of Jesus became diluted with Greek philosophy, and the church, which was sworn to teach it became involved with social groups and nations whose interests and instincts ran counter to its ideals; so that in time an emaciated ethics of mere respectability was substituted for real Christian morality. This failure of the church to insist on its own religion has been disastrous to civilization and to the church itself. Having become impotent before or in actual league with the forces of economic greed and racial passion which have destroyed our

civilization, it must face the scorn of the millions who suffer from the sins of modern society and are beginning to understand the causes of their misery.

"The complete secularization of society is a fairly recent historical development. The Protestant Reformation contributed to it immensely when it centred the moral dynamic of religion upon the drama of the inner life and removed every spiritual restraint from social groups. So Machiavelli's political philosophy became the creed of nations, and with Adam Smith business joined the state in its defiance of moral law. A soulless economics aggravated a pagan politics, both outraging the spiritual evaluation of human life and defying the moral law which was meant to preserve and to protect it. It might be maintained that this secularization of economics and politics is not new, but as old as history, and that neither Christianity nor any other religion has ever really conquered a nation or brought economic relationships under the dominion of its conscience. But the naive connivance of Protestantism with rampant nationalism and the economics of *laissez-faire* will hardly compare favourably with the best that the Middle Ages accomplished when the church tried, however qualifiedly, to subject social instincts, which express themselves in political and economic life, to some kind of law.

"Christian liberalism would do well not to be too sure that it is the force which is to vitalize religion and redeem civilization. It lacks the necessary passion for that task. Its position is weak because it was reached by a retreat and not by an advance. Liberalism rediscovered the religion of Jesus because it found the authority of the Bible untenable in the modern day. It was captivated by the theological simplicity rather than by the moral splendor of his gospel. It was the impatience of our age with the theological subtleties and dogmatic absurdities, rather than its sense of moral need, which prompted this development. Having arrived at the religion of Jesus by a strategic retreat, liberalism has lacked the spiritual passion to make a bold advance upon the positions of economic and political paganism which imperil our civilization. In its hands the heroic vigour of the Gospel has frequently been reduced to a few amiable ethical precepts which have no power to match the social iniquities of our day."

#### OBJECTIVES *versus* IDEALS

Henry Nelson Wieman writes in the *International Journal of Ethics* :—

When a civilisation reaches maturity, as ours has done, and as the Graeco-Roman did, it calls for something more than ideals that entertain and inspire. It calls for a classification of those facts by which and for which we live. It calls for objectives. As long as tradition sustains us, we can get along without knowledge of objectives. We can give our thoughts to the luxury of ideals, and because of the meagre, mean, and impoverished life which tradition often imposes, these pleasant fanciful illusions are indispensable to make our living humanly tolerable. We must deceive ourselves with ideals in order to carry on. But when tradition breaks down, and we must direct our own life according to goods which we have deliberately chosen, when we thus pass from drift to mastery, we must know our objectives. We must know that actual good, the conservation and increase of which constitutes the good of living. Pleasant ideals, illusions, and dreams, however valuable in the past, no longer suffice.

The writer says that the objectives of human being can be classified under the heads of scientific method, association, love, moral endeavour, æsthetic appreciation, and worship.

Regarding worship, he observes :

Worship is our self-surrender to the cosmic process which we accept as our own personal concern, though we cannot know it. The Mystic worshipper—and that means almost any genuine worshipper—even more than the artist and the æsthete, is aware of the flow of experience. This flow means for him, and means, in actual fact, the cosmic process, in so far as it immediately affects him at all, or in so far as he immediately expresses it in consciousness. The worshipper differs from the artist and æsthete in that he does not select and exclude certain portions of experience in conformity to certain canons of beauty, taste, and technique of art. The worshipper is receptive to the total mass of experience in so far as he is able to attend to it at all. If this total mass of experience, signifying the movement of the whole universe is discerned to be the expression of the personal God, this worship is greatly promoted, and the distinctively human objective of life is much more.....completely attained through religion. Whether or not the cosmic process be of this nature is a matter of fact to be discovered by all the powers of investigation at our command ; but it cannot be accepted merely because we should like to have it so (fantasy), or because it would make a beautiful ideal (value judgment). The reasons why these two methods are impossible in this age of crumbling tradition we have already indicated. But religion is one essential form of the human objective in living, because in worship we anticipate that unattained abundance of life which is found when man lives the life of the whole world. But this is hardly possible unless man can live with God. Thus the problem of religion is one of the greatest we have to face in these times of crumbling tradition.

#### GANDHIJI'S ADVICE TO CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES

Speaking at the Christian Missionary Conference, held last evening in Calcutta Mr. Gandhi expressed pain at the sting left in Bishop Heber's works about India when he said, "Every prospect pleases; man alone is vile." That, Mr. Gandhi said, was belied by his own experience in all his travels throughout India. It was a fundamental mistake on the part of the Christian missionary to approach Hindu India with the idea that the Hindus were heathens and that their religion was not derived from God but from Satan.

Mr. Gandhi said that his message to Christian missionaries was to cultivate receptiveness. The Christian missionary, from the moment he set foot on this soil, came under the protection of the temporal power ruling the country. Gandhiji continued : "To my Christian missionary friends, I say :—Noble as you are, you have dissociated yourselves from the people whom you want to serve." He stated that the missionary service was not to be measured by the number of conversions or by the amount of relief doled out to those in distress, but was to be measured by the spirit of receptiveness. He said that the only message which he wished to give from the bottom of his heart,—and he hoped that it would find a corner in the hearts of the missionaries who were always his friends,—was that they should identify themselves with the masses of India, even as Christ did in his own time.

The missionaries can also remember that Jesus himself has said that there are 'other sheep' in his flock which his followers knew not of.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION RESIDENTIAL HIGH SCHOOL, MYLAPORE, MADRAS

The new buildings of the Ramakrishna Mission Residential High School were opened on the 13th of July last by H. E. Lord Goschen, Governor of Madras.

A host of distinguished ladies and gentlemen gathered under a tastefully decorated *pandal* in front of the Central Hall of the new buildings, and the function began with chanting in Sanskrit and Tamil by the students of the Home. Dewan Bahadur Mr. A.V. Ramalinga Aiyar then read a report giving the history of the Home and the origin of the Residential High School. He observed how, after the new buildings of the Home were opened in 1921, the strength increased rapidly, and it was thought fit to open a Residential High School in order that the benefits of the Home may flow more freely to its inmates. The School was opened in 1922, recognition having been secured only for the High School classes, and that for a period of two years as a temporary measure. In these years the S. S. L. C. results were promising and the experiment proved a success in every way, and it was considered advisable to retain the School permanently and also to open the Lower Secondary Forms in it. When the necessity for the provision of a separate block for accommodating the School became gradually pressing, an appeal for the School Buildings was made to the Nattukkottai Nagarathar Community and they readily undertook to find the entire funds. The new buildings have been deservedly named after the community as the Nattukkottai Nagarathar Vidyasala.

Srimat Swami Sharvanandaji thanked His Excellency Lord Goschen for having consented to open the Residential High School. The Swamiji also thanked the Nattukkottai Nagarathar community in an impressive speech for their remarkable munificence which, he said, was not confined merely to South India, but extended also to the whole of India, Burma, Federated Malay States, and Ceylon.

His Excellency appreciating the work done by the Mission said : "In conclusion, as head of this Presidency, I should express my deep appreciation of the splendid work which the Ramakrishna Mission has done and is doing for Madras, in running this Students' Home. I am told that the Mylapore Home is only one of its many activities throughout India and that in other places too the Mission is to be found rendering service to the sick, the poor, and the distressed. I wish success to the Ramakrishna Mission for the good work which it is doing for India."

The Hon'ble Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar then expressed on behalf of the Mission and the guests a hearty vote of thanks to His Excellency, the distinguished President, and to Lady Goschen.

Rao Sahib Mr. C. Ramaswami Aiyangar, the Secretary of the Mission in Madras, tendered the key in the hands of the President, who walking to the entrance of the Residential School declared it open.

We wish all success and prosperity to the Institution and hope it will serve as a model of its kind for India.

# Aitareya Upanishad

## INTRODUCTION

This Upanishad is so named after its author Mahidasha Aitareya. The tradition is that he received the sacred teachings embodied in the whole of Aitareya Brahmana and Aitareya Aranyaka from his tutelary deity, Bhumi (goddess of earth). The whole of Aitareya Brahmana with its appendix Aitareya Aranyaka belongs to Rig-Veda, and the present Upanishad the fourth, fifth and sixth chapters of the second book of the Aitareya Aranyaka. There is another Upanishad which passes by the name, Maha-aitareya Upanishad, which comprises the whole of the second and third books of Aitareya Aranyaka.

The speciality of this Upanishad lies in its explaining the *modus operandi* of creation, and the Vedantic cosmology, clothed in a beautiful allegory, and in the first place, emphasising upon the truth that this whole universe is but an emanation from the Supreme Atman, nay, the Supreme Being is Himself appearing in the form of this visible and the invisible world. Secondly, it clearly points out the eternal truth that the individual soul is no other than the Supreme Lord Himself appearing in the individualised form. Further, it draws the attention of the aspirant of Truth to the fact that the *Summum bonum* of life lies not in knowing and mastering things of the material world but in the acquisition, or better, realisation of this unity of the individual self and the Supreme Self.

In the chapters previous to this Upanishad, the Brahmana speaks of Pranas as the first cause; of course, there Prana means Hiranya-garbha or the sum-total of the universal mind. But here, in this Upanishad, the attention of the student is drawn to a still subtler truth that this universe is an emanation of the Supreme Intelligence. This process of leading the mind of a student from gross to subtle and subtler truths by association and implication, is a common method adopted in our Shastras, and is known by the name, Arundhati-darshana-nyaya. First, as the ordinary persons addicted to the pleasures of life, are seeking the joys of this world and of the other, through the performance of sacrificial rites and other observances of the Karmakanda, they can do so only by attaining the knowledge

of Hiranya-garbha who is the source of all material life and prosperity. Hence in the Karmakanda, Hiranya-garbha or Prana is described, for one attached to Karma, as the origin of creation; but for him who is trying to transcend all the limitations of this life of causation, that is not the finale. Hiranya-garbha is as much a created object as any other objects of this world, and so He is equally liable to change and destruction. The seeker of immortality must go beyond and quaff the waters of immortality of the transcendental Atman, and just that is described in this Upanishad.

ओं वाङ् मे मनसि प्रतिष्ठिता मनो मे वाचि प्रतिष्ठितमाविर्वावीर्मे  
एधि । वेदस्य म आणीस्थः श्रुतं मे मा प्रहासीरनेनाधीतेनाऽहोरात्रान्सं-  
धाम्युतं वदिष्यामि । सत्यं वदिष्यामि । तन्मामवतु । तद्वक्तारमवतु । अवतु  
मामवतु वक्तारम् ॥ ओं शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

मे mine वाक् speech मनसि in mind प्रतिष्ठिता (भवतु) be settled मे  
mine मनः mind वाचि in speech प्रतिष्ठितम् be settled आविः O Atman  
मे for me आविः एधि do appear (ह वाङ् मनसे O mind and speech) मे  
for me वेदस्य of the Vedas आणी carrier स्थः become मे mine श्रुतं  
whatever I have heard मा प्रहासीः do not destroy अनेन by this अधी-  
तेन study अहोरात्रान् day and night संधामि conjoin कृतं truth वदिष्यामि  
shall speak सत्यं the real वदिष्यामि shall speak तत् that Brahman  
माम् me अवतु protect तत् that Brahman वक्तारम् speaker, the teacher  
अवतु may protect.

May my speech be fixed in the mind! May my mind be fixed in the speech! O self-manifested Atman, manifest thyself before me. O my mind and speech, ye are the supporters of the Vedas, may ye not destroy what I have heard. By that study of mine, I conjoin the day and the night. I shall speak of the real, I shall speak the truth. May that Brahman protect me! May that Brahman protect the teacher! May That protect me! May That protect the teacher! Om Peace! Peace! Peace!

# Aitareya Upanishad

## CHAPTER I

आत्मा वा इदमेक एवाग्र आसीत् ।

नान्यत्किञ्चन मिषत् ।

स ईक्षत् लोकान्नु सृजा इति ॥ १ ॥

इदं this अग्रे in the beginning एकः one, alone आत्मा the Atman वै verily आसीत् existed, was अन्यत् other किञ्चन anything मिषत् winking, active, living न not (आसीत् existed) सः he ईक्षत् saw, thought लोकान् the worlds नु assuredly सृजे shall create (अहं I)

In the beginning (all) this was verily the Atman alone. Nothing else whatsoever living, existed. He thought '(now) verily shall I create the worlds.'

[*In the beginning etc.* :—i.e., in the beginning before the creation started, there was nothing, living or non-living, that existed except the Atman, the primal basic principle of all that exists, the sentient and the insentient.

*The Atman* :—the word is used in the Vedic literature in various senses as the soul or the principle of consciousness, the individual soul, the inner principle of a thing, and the Reality itself. Here the Sruti uses the word in the most comprehensive sense including all the different connotations referred to above. The Sruti here, as elsewhere also, clearly indicates that the Atman is the first Principle or the first cause, is the real Reality which lends its colour of reality to everything else that *appears* to us as real ; and here we find the final solution of the much-vexed dispute between Idealism and Realism. Looked at from this point of view, ideas would appear as real as an *a posteriori* object, and similarly, an external object has as much value as an *a priori* idea. The dual bifurcation of subject and object is but a phenomenon of Consciousness and has no *absolute* value. The experience of the dual reality of the relative plane has a common source and a common background, which is the Absolute Reality which holds within itself potentially both the aspects of existence, *viz.*, the Substance and Intelligence.

*The worlds* :—i. e., the different planes of existence where the *Jivas* or individual souls can enjoy the fruits of their *Karmas* done in the previous cycle.

NOTE :—Be it remembered here that according to the Upanishadic lore, there is no such thing as first creation ; the so-called creation is but a process of gradual expression or evolution of what lies potentially in the *Maha Karana*, the Supreme First Cause. It is but the beginning of a new cycle and nothing more. Further the Sruti, by asserting that nothing existed at the beginning of the cycle except the Atman, and that He *thought* of creation and the creation proceeded forth, tacitly indicates that this Atman is at once both the material as well as the efficient cause of the universe which is nothing but a projection and a concretisation of His thought-energy. Moreover, the Sruti bridges thereby the gulf between physics and metaphysics.

But this is according to the *Parinama Vada* or the pantheistic view of creation. The real import of the Sruti in describing the *modus operandi* of creation will be fully dealt with, at the conclusion of this Upanishad.]

स इमाँल्लोकानसृजत । अम्भो मरीचीर्मरमापोऽदोऽम्भः परेण दिवं  
यौः प्रतिष्ठाऽन्तरिक्षं मरीचयः । पृथिवी मरो या अधस्तात्ता आपः ॥ २ ॥

स that (Atma) इमान् these (the following) लोकान् the worlds असृजत created अम्भः water (the celestial watery region), मरीची the region of the rays (the sky), space. मरः the region of the mortal (the earth), आपः the waters (nether-worlds) अदः that, परेण higher दिवं heaven, यौः the heaven प्रतिष्ठा the basis अन्तरिक्षं intermediary space, the sky मरीचयः the region of the rays. पृथिवी the earth, मरः the world of the mortal याः अधस्तात् what are below (the earth) ताः those आपः the watery regions.

He created the following worlds, *viz.*, *ambhas*, *mari-chi*, *mara* and *ap*. The *ambhas* is situated above the heaven, and the heaven is the support. The sky is the *Marichis*. The *mara* is the earth, and what are below the earth are the *ap* world.

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

" Let the lion of Vedanta roar. "

" Let me tell you, strength, strength is what we want  
And the first step in getting strength is to uphold  
The Upanishads and believe that ' I am the Atman. ' "

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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## PRAAYER

यो देवानां प्रभवश्चोद्भवश्च  
विद्याधिपो रुद्रो महर्षिः ।  
हिरण्यगर्भं पश्यत जायमानं  
स नो बुद्ध्या शुभया संयुनक्तु ॥

**H**E is the source of all the gods and from Him they have proceeded. He is the ruler of all—the terrible destroyer and the great seer. He first beheld the birth of the universe. May He give unto us noble thoughts !

## GOSPEL OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

*Dakshineswar Temple—June, 1883*

### I

**I**T is the 8th of June, the summer of 1883. The evening service in the Mother's temple is over. Sri Ramakrishna is fanning Her.

Ram, Kedar Chatterjee and Tarak have come from Calcutta to visit the Master with offerings of flowers and sweets. Kedar is an elderly gentleman of fifty and very devout. The very name of Lord fills his eyes with tears. He was formerly an adherent of the Brahmo Samaj, but after following various other sects, he has now taken shelter in Sri Ramakrishna. He is an accountant in a Government Office. . . . . Tarak is about 28 years old, and is the son of a great Sadhaka. He had married but soon after lost his wife. He would often come to Ram's house and pay visits to Sri Ramakrishna with Ram and Nitya Gopal though he was still employed in an office. His heart finds no joy in the world and is ever thirsting for God.

Sri Ramakrishna comes out of the temple and salutes the Divine Mother, bowing to the ground. He sees the devotees eagerly waiting for him. He is highly pleased to see Tarak and strokes his chin in affection.

The Master is sitting on the floor of his apartment lost in ecstasy. He has put forward his feet which Ram and Kedar have beautifully decorated with flowers and garlands. Kedar is holding the Master's toes believing that thereby he will have the Master's spiritual power communicated to himself.

Coming down partly to the normal plane, the Master says, "Mother, what can he do to me by holding my toes?"

Kedar folds his hands in humility. The Master is still absorbed in ecstasy. He says to Kedar: "Your

mind tends towards *kamini-kanchana* though you profess otherwise. ”

“ Forward ! After sandelwood, there are the silver mine and the gold mine and the diamonds ! Think not you have achieved the goal because you are a little inspired. ”

The Master converses with the Mother : “ Mother ! Remove him hence ! ” Kedar is frightened : he asks Ram, “ What does the Master mean ? ”

The sight of Rakhal enraptures the Master again. He asks Rakhal : “ I came here long long ago. When did you come ? ” Does the Master mean that he is the Lord incarnate and that Rakhal is one of his associates ?

On Saturday, the 10th day of the bright fortnight of Jaishta, corresponding to the 15th of June, 1883 A. D., Adhar and M. have availed themselves of the holiday to visit Sri Ramakrishna at the temple of Dakshineswar. There have come also Rakhal's father and his father-in-law, that is to say, father of his (Rakhal's father's) second wife ; the latter has long heard of Sri Ramakrishna and being a *Sadhaka* has come here to pay his respects to the Master.

The noon-day meal has been over. The devotees are seated on the floor of the Master's room and the Master from over his small cot is looking from time to time at the “ father-in-law. ”

Asks the father-in-law : “ Sir, is it possible to realise God in the Grihasta-Asrama ? ”

Sri R. (smiling) : “ Why not ? Live like the mud-fish. It lives in the mud but the mud does not stick to its body. Live again like the corrupt woman who attends to her household work but has her heart always on her paramour. So do you perform your worldly duties, fixing your whole mind on God. It is however very difficult. I told the Brahmajnanins, ‘ If you keep condiment, tamarind and jars of water in the same room with

a delirious patient, how can you expect him to be cured ? The very idea of tamarind makes the mouth water and the woman is verily a tamarind condiment to the man. And what is the jar of water ? It is the perpetual thirst for the world. Thirst is never appeased. The delirious patient says : ' I shall drink a whole jar of water.' The world again is full of distractions. ' If you go this way I shall throw.....at you, if you go that way I shall throw the broomstick, if you go the other way I shall throw the shoe.' And you cannot contemplate on God except in solitude.

" If I am repeatedly disturbed in the melting of gold for ornament, how can I do the melting ? Suppose you are cleaning rice ; you must do it yourself. You must take samples of it from time to time to see how far it is cleaned. If, however, you are again and again called away, while working, how can the cleaning be properly done ? "

*A devotee* : " What, then, is the way out, sir ? "

*Sri Ramakrishna* : " Yes, there is a way out, can you have intense renunciation ? Only then is there hope. Give up with strong determination whatever you know to be false.

" When I was ill, I was taken to Gangaprasad Sen and was told by him to take *Swarna Parpadi* and must therefore desist from drinking water and only take pomegranate juice instead. They all thought I would not do without water ; but I made a strong resolve. As a Paramahansa—not a duck but a swan\*—I shall drink milk !

" You must live in solitude for a time. Never fear if you have once touched ' the old lady ' in the game. Be ' gold ' ; then you can live anywhere you like. After attaining devotion and realising God in solitude, one can live in the world as well.

\*Reference is made to the mythological swan which can separate milk from water when both are mixed together and kept for it to drink.

"(To Rakhal's father) Hence I ask the boys to live here, for thereby they will get Bhakti and then they can return to the world."

*A Devotee* : "If God is doing everything why then should there be any distinction between good and evil, virtue and vice. Sin also is His will!"

*Father-in-law of Rakhal's father* : "How can we know His will? 'Thou Great First Cause art least understood.'"

*Sri R.* : "There are virtue and vice. But He Himself is unaffected by them. The air contains smell both fair and foul but is not affected by it. Such is the nature of His creation. It is a mixture of good and evil, even as the species 'Tree' subsumes under it mango, jack-fruit, and hog-plum and various other trees. Don't you see how even a wicked man is necessary. An estate where people are turbulent requires a turbulent man to be sent to it. Only then can they be controlled."

The conversation again turns on the householder's life. Says Sri Ramakrishna : "The fact is, that life in the world means so much wastage of the mind. The loss that accrues from this waste can be made up only by one's becoming a *Sannyasin*.

"The first birth is given by the father. There is the second birth when one is invested with the holy thread. There is yet another birth when one takes *sannyasa*. *Kamini* and *kanchana* are the two obstructions. Love of woman takes man away from the path of God and he never knows how he falls. When I visited the fort (the Fort Williams of Calcutta) I did not at all feel that I was going along a sloping road. When I reached the Fort, I found how far below the level I had come. Alas! it is not given to men to know this. Captain says that his wife is a *jnani*. A man possessed by ghost does not feel that he is so possessed : he says he is alright.

“ And there is not only the fear of lust in the world but there is also anger. The moment one is thwarted in one's desire one gets angry. ”

*M.* : “ When sometimes a cat pounces on my food, I cannot drive it off. ”

*Sri R.* : “ Why ? What harm even if you strike it once in a way ? The householder must *hiss* though not sting or do any actual harm. But in order to save himself from his enemy, he must feign anger. . Otherwise the enemy will take advantage of his passivity. One who has renounced need not, however, hiss. ”

*A Devotee* : “ Then, Sir, I see it is very difficult to realise Him in the world. How many can do that ? No, I find none. ”

*Sri R.* : “ Why not ? I have heard of a Deputy Magistrate in that district. His name is Pratap Singh, he is charitable, meditative, devout and is endowed with many qualities. He sent for me. Yes ! There are such people. ”

## II

*Sri R.* : “ Sadhana is essential. But, of course, if one has real faith, faith in the words of the Guru, one has not to practise very hard.

“ Coming to cross the Yamuna, Vyasa met a party of Gopis at the ferry ghat. They also wanted to cross the river but no boat was available. They therefore prayed to Vyasa to find a means. Vyasa said ‘ I will take you to the other side ; but I am very hungry. Have you got anything for me to eat ? ’ The Gopis had plenty of milk, curd, and butter. He ate the whole lot and then going to the water side, he prayed ‘ Oh ! Yamuna : if I have not eaten anything to day, then let your waters part making way for us to go over to the other side. ’ No sooner had he finished the prayer than the waters actually parted and a way was made. The Gopis were struck dumb with

amazement. They thought, 'Just now he ate so heavily, yet he prayed: if I have not eaten anything, etc.' Even such strong faith is needed! 'Not I, but it is Narayana abiding in my soul, who has eaten.'

"Though Sankara was a knower of Brahman, he still was not quite free from the sense of separation in the beginning, and his faith was not firm. He had just come out from the Ganges after bath, when a chandala, carrying a load of flesh, happened to touch him. Sankara cried out 'What! you touch me!' The chandala replied: 'Sir, neither did you touch me nor did I touch you. The pure Self is neither body nor mind, nor is It the five elements or the twenty-four principles.' This gave Sankara the perfection of knowledge.

"When Jada Bharata carrying the king's palanquin began to discourse on self-knowledge, king Vahugana came down from his seat and asked him, 'Who are you?' Jada Bharata replied 'I am neti, neti, the negation of everything, *i. e.*, the Pure Self.' He had the perfect faith that he was the Pure Self.

"'I am He. I am verily the Pure Self.' Such is the theme of jnanins. The Bhaktas say that these are the glories of the Lord. Who could know a man to be rich if he had not the splendour of wealth? But of course it will be quite a different thing when seeing the devotion of his Bhakta, The Lord will say 'I and thou art one.' Suppose the king is sitting on his throne and a servant comes and ascends the throne and sitting there says 'Oh king I am the same as yourself', will not the people think him to be mad? But if, pleased with his services, the king one day says to him, 'Come, sit by me, there is no harm in it, you are the same as myself,' and he ascends the throne and sits there, there will be nothing wrong in it. It is not good for ordinary individuals to say 'I am He! I am He!' It is to water that the waves belong, not the water to the waves.

“The truth is, you cannot attain Yoga until your mind has become calm, whatever path you may tread. The mind is under the control of the Yogi not the Yogin of the mind. When the mind is calm one gets *kumbhaka*. This state of *kumbhaka* is attainable also through Bhakti yoga. Through the excess of Bhakti one's breathing stops. Singing the refrain, ‘My Nitai is like unto a mad elephant’ when a man is entranced in ecstasy, he can no more recite the whole line: he can barely say ‘Hati’, ‘Hati’ which culminates in a single sound ‘Ha’. Breathing stops in ecstasy, and that is *kumbhaka*.

“Suppose some one is sweeping and a neighbour comes and tells him that a certain person is dead. Now if the deceased be not his relation, he continues sweeping only saying now and then, ‘What a pity ! the man is dead, he was a good person.’ His sweeping goes on undisturbed. But if the deceased be a relative, then the broomstick at once falls from his hand and he swoons with a groan. His breathing stops and he cannot think or work for some time.

“Have you not noted of women how, when any of them gazes at anything in wonder or listens to any one with gaping mouth, others remark whether she is in a trance ? This is also an instance to the point. Her breathing stops, so she looks on with her mouth open in wonder.

“Merely repeating ‘I am He,’ ‘I am He,’ won't do. There are signs of the *jnanin*. Narendra's eyes are very prominent. (About Mani) His forehead and eyes also have auspicious signs. There is another thing : all have not the same spiritual state. The *jivas* have been classified under four heads : bound, seeking freedom, free and eternal. It is not true that all have to practise *sadhana*. There are *Nitya Siddhas* and *Sadhana Siddhas*. Some realize God and others are men of realization even from their very birth, like Prahlada. There is a bird called Homa which lives high up in the sky. When it lays its eggs, the eggs begin to fall from the sky and as they

fall, they break and the young ones come out. They also fall down and down, but before reaching the earth they grow their wings even during their down-ward course. Then when they sight the earth, they know that to fall down on the earth is to die instantly, and at once they turn back in upward flight to their mother. So also, *Nitya Siddhas* only call on Mother.

“Prahlada and others who belong to the category of the Eternally Free realize God before they practise *sadhana* even as the gourd and pumpkin plants bear fruits before the flowers come out.

“ (To Rakhal's father) A *Nitya Siddha*, even if he be born in a low family, is a *Nitya Siddha* and nothing lower. A gram seed fallen in a dung heap produces a gram plant and nothing else.

“He has endowed different men with different measures of powers ; it is as a wick burning in one place and a torch in another. By one remark of his I found out the depth of Vidyasagar's intellect. When I spoke of the difference of powers in men, he said, ‘Then Sir, Has He given powers unequally ?’

“‘Yes, certainly He has,’ I replied, ‘had there been no inequality of power, why is it that you are so famous and we come to visit you ? We have heard of your learning and compassion. Therefore we come. Certainly you have not grown two horns on your head !’

“Though so learned, so renowned, yet Vidyasagar made such an unwise remark : ‘Has He endowed men unequally ?’ Do you know what it is ? Only the big fish are at first caught in the net. But when the fisherman stirs the mud, the small fishes come out and are netted. Even so when a man is not a knower of God, the small fries of his mind by and by come out. Mere scholarship does not avail.”

## HINDUS HAVE BEEN EVOLUTIONISTS 4000 YEARS\*

SWAMI PRABHAVANANDA

**W**ELL has it been said by Sir Monier Williams : "Indeed if I may be allowed the anachronism, the Hindus were Spinozites more than 2000 years before the existence of Spinoza ; and Darwinians many centuries before Darwin ; and Evolutionists many centuries before the doctrine of evolution had been accepted by the scientists of our time and before any word like evolution existed in any language of the world. "

Yes, the doctrine of evolution was known in India long before the Christian era. About the seventh century B. C., Kapila, the father of Hindu evolutionists, explained this theory for the first time through logic and science.

The Hindus accept the scientific fact of evolution, but reject the metaphysical speculations of the scientists. For they have their own explanations, which are more logical and scientific. It would be well, therefore, for the scientists, as well as the theologians of the present day, to study the explanation of evolution as given by the ancient seers of India. I give here a few arguments with the hope that they may evoke the desire to study the ideas of the Hindu philosophers and scientists.

*Nasata Sai Jayeta*—"Existence cannot be produced by non-existence." That is the dictum on which is based the Hindus' philosophy of creation.

Non-existence can never be the cause of what exists. Something cannot come out of nothing. Says a philosopher of India : "That the law of causation is omnipotent and knows no time or place when it did not exist, is a doctrine as old as the Aryan race, sung by their ancient poet-seers, formulated by their philosophers, and made the cornerstone upon which the Hindu man even of to-day builds his whole scheme of life."

\*Published in the San Francisco Bulletin just on the eve of the sensational trial of professor John Scopes who was found guilty and fined for teaching the theory of evolution in the public school of Tennessee. The article was given a prominent place in the paper and has attracted wide notice in America. Vide *Gleanings* for the details of the case.

In explaining the theory of evolution, science admits of one principal factor in the process of evolution and that is the "tendency to vary". But is that "tendency to vary" indefinite or is it limited by any definite law? Science fails to give any answer.

To put the question in another form: We find among us a Christ man or a Buddha man, the manifestation of perfection and divinity on earth. How did this perfection and divinity come to manifest in their lives? Was the moral and spiritual nature in them super-added to the animal nature by some extra-cosmic spiritual agency? We know such an explanation is neither logical nor scientific.

Let us see what the Hindus have to say on the point. The Hindus accept evolution and admit the laws of variation, but go a step beyond modern science by explaining the cause of that "tendency to vary." Their philosophers say: "There is nothing in the end which was not also in the beginning." This is a natural law which governs the process of evolution, as well as the law of causation. And if we admit this grand truth of nature, the "tendency" and the gradual manifestation of the higher nature of man through the process of evolution become easily explained. We notice the trend of scientific monism also is toward that end. J. Arthur Thomson, an eminent English scientist, says: "The world is one, not two-fold; the spiritual influx is the primal reality and there is nothing in the end which was not also in the beginning."

And as such the Christhood or the Buddhahood is already there, the perfection and divinity is inherent—latent in every individual soul. It exists in the most minute bioplasm as well as in the highest man—the Christ man or the Buddha man. In the other forms it remains "involved," while in the highest type it becomes "evolved." Thus, according to the Hindu evolutionists, man is neither a descendant of an ape, nor of a fish, but comes from God—made in the image of God. Godhood is involved in every life, and that becomes evolved, as we find it in those known to mankind as Saviours or Divine Incarnations. God and divinity exist in the minutest protoplasm as well as in the highest man. The forms change slowly and gradually, giving rise to various species and forms, until the little bioplasmic cell evolves as man—ultimately to unfold as a Christ or a Buddha.

To quote Patanjali, a Hindu scientist and philosopher who flourished about the seventh century B. C.: "The change of

one species into another is attained by the 'infilling of nature.' " And he explains this "infilling of nature" by the simile of peasants irrigating fields from a river or reservoir. Our struggle for progression means taking away the obstacles and by its own nature the divinity will manifest itself, just as the water for irrigating will flow of itself if the obstruction is removed. The pressure is not therefore from outside but from inside. Each soul is the sum-total of the universal experiences already coiled up there, and of all these experiences, only those will come out which find suitable circumstances ; and the "tendency" is there because the "potential" divinity strives to become "kinetic."

The scientist, some 20 years ago, could have brought the one and only objection to this explanation of the Hindus, and that is : "What proof is there that there is Spirit and Consciousness in the minutest germ which evolves as the highest man ?" But today, the scientists themselves have proved there is "unity of life." "There is no such thing as 'dead' matter," writes Sir John Woodroffe, a Western student of Hindu philosophy, formerly the justice of Calcutta High Court. "The well-known experiments of Dr. Jagadish Bose (a Hindu scientist) establish response to stimuli in inorganic matter. What is this response but the indication of the existence of that 'Sattva Guna' (the tendency to manifest divinity) which Vedanta and Sangkhya affirm to exist in all things, organic or inorganic ? It is the play of 'Chit' (consciousness) in this 'Sattva,' so muffled in 'Tamas' (ignorance) as not to be recognizable, except by delicate scientific experiment, which appears as the so-called 'mechanical' response. Consciousness is here veiled and imprisoned by 'Tamas.' Inorganic matter displays it in the form of that seed or rudiment of sentiency which, enlarging into the simple pulses of feeling of the lowest degrees of organized life, at length emerges in the developed self-conscious sensations of human life. What varies is its wrappings. There is thus a progressive "release" of consciousness from gross matter through plants and animals to man. Indian doctrine has taught this evolution in its 84 lakhs of previous births."

To deny evolution, therefore, is to deny Christ, and to reject Christ and Christhood is to make science and evolution unscientific.

If we accept Christ as an ideal of perfection, how are we to explain the causes of his working out the perfection that he

manifested in his life ? (I do not consider worth noticing those that are dogmatic in their assertions about Christ. Let us be rationalistic and let Christianity stand on rationalistic grounds or let it fall). Now, there can be three alternatives. He might have been a freak of nature, an exception. In that case he cannot be made the ideal of our life. Or, he might have been the product of his parents, as many try to explain by the theory of hereditary transmission. But we know who his father was. Millions and millions of carpenters like Joseph had lived and are still living. How to bridge the gulf then between this father and the son who is worshipped as God by the people of the world ? The third alternative then is that he had evolved his perfection himself. The power and knowledge and divinity were accumulating and evolving there for ages and ages, until there burst into the society a Christ man. This to us seems the most rationalistic view. And to evolve that perfection, that Christhood, is the ideal and goal of every individual and is the end of the journey of life. "Be ye perfect even as the Father in Heaven is perfect." "The Kingdom of Heaven is within." We Hindus accept Christ and the truths preached by the Great Prophet. We Hindus know that the heart of all religions in the world is the same if the religions are understood properly. And we know that true religion is not opposed to true science.

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## PESSIMISM AND LIFE'S IDEAL : THE HINDU OUTLOOK AND A CHALLENGE

(*With a criticism of Life and an interpretation of History*)

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(Continued from page 139)

**M**ORAL life or the life of conscience (*dharma-jiban*) means primarily a fight with Nature (*pravritti*), for *Nature includes all the impulses Nature has implanted in us*, and progress in moral life means nothing but progress in our conquest of *artha* and *kama* (desire and means) or RAJO-GUNA and TAMO-GUNA which include all the six passions, viz., *kama* (lust), *krodha* (wrath), *lobha* (greed), *mada* (pride), *moha* (all sorts of infatuation) and *matsarya* (envy) and advance towards *sattwa-guna* and *nivritti* (return path or renunciation) ; or, in other words, moral progress means the progressive assertion of our manhood till at last we get beyond all the three *gunas*—realise the Absolute Good and achieve the final realisation of *Moksha* or *Nirvana* when all the fetters drop and *karma* is no bondage. This is a struggle and an achievement we come across nowhere in the animal world. It is nowhere to be found in Nature. *What is called higher nature is anti-Nature and not Nature, for the term Nature has a specific meaning* and we have no right to depart from this sense of the word. NATURE IS UNMORAL. MAN'S REVOLT AGAINST NATURE ARISES FROM A FEELING OF PROFOUND DISCONTENT. THIS DISCONTENT IS DIVINE AND IT IS NOTHING BUT PESSIMISM. IT IS THIS DISCONTENT THAT ULTIMATELY LEADS TO CONTENTMENT. Says Sankaracharya : "*Kathamiha manava tava santosha* (How, O man, can you have contentment here) ?" Says Vivekananda : "*Hetha sukh iccha matiman* (Do you want happiness here, O you intelligent man) ?" And Bhagawan Ramakrishna says in his homely way with his characteristic touch of humour : "Suppose you are a High Court Judge. You have got wealth, position, name, fame, sons and daughters. You think it is all right with you and God says : 'Amen ! Be it so !' Then a time comes when you say : 'What have I done ?' and God says :

'What have you done indeed?' " I do not pretend to know a better explanation of morality than this. How many types of ethical theory have we not seen in our days and how high-sounding are not their names—Utilitarianism, Eudæmonism, Evolution, Intuition, Hegel's Self-realisation according to which all the physical and mental faculties are to be harmoniously cultivated and according to which the complete extinction of desires, including sexual, is bad ! But *Pessimism, which is the foundation of ascetic or absolute morality, gives us an ideal which nothing can approach and than which nothing can claim to be more satisfactory.* This ascetic morality cannot be deduced from optimism or meliorism, and this is the last term of the evolution of morality. *Morality cannot evolve beyond this stage.* If anybody believes that it can, I shall be glad to see him explain his position. That the ASCETIC IDEAL IS NOT ANTI-SOCIAL and ASCETIC MORALITY AND PERFECT LOVE GO TOGETHER I shall show later on. It is this absolute standard that we must constantly keep in view. If we judge human conduct by this absolute standard, then only is it possible for us to fix its place and know its worth. There is no other means of evaluation I am aware of.

It is a matter of regret that there is so much reluctance to admit that ascetic morality, absolute morality or total renunciation is the highest ideal of life. The chief cause of the prevailing doubt as to the supremacy of the ideal is psychological. Ordinary men have such fondness for their natural impulses and propensities that they shudder at the thought of the extinction of all that they value in life, and in this country a subsidiary cause is that certain religious sects in recent times have been founded by householders who were all prayerful men, no doubt, and good men as the term is commonly understood, but who could not wholly subdue their desires and rise above all frailties. To assign to *sannyasa* a higher place is to lower the position of these sects. The talk of total renunciation or complete *vairagya* touches the self-love of these sects, and so there is no end of flutter in their dove-cots. Thus we see that in self-defence they cite those texts from the *Samhitas* which applaud the householder's life, though at other times their reverence for the *Samhita-kars* (law-givers) is not much in evidence. Poor Rajarshi Janaka is also trotted out now and then to save the situation ! I have yet to know that Rajarshi Janaka increased and multiplied like flies in summer till the

end of his days and had any yearning for creature-comforts like Tom, Dick and Harry.

I do not mean offence to anyone but plain truths have to be plainly told and the relation between cause and effect has to be established in this world of Maya. I think it unnecessary to quote Scripture to show that ascetic morality or *sannyasa* is the highest ideal of life. I shall show it by the ordinary process of reasoning. If you once admit that self-restraint (*indriya-nigraha*, *samyam*) is the very stuff of morality (*dharma*), then you will have also to admit that the man who has completely quelled his passions (*jitendriya*) is the man whose moral life (*dharma-jivan*) is the highest. If chastity is *dharma* at all, then you cannot but admit that absolute chastity or spotless celibacy (*lifelong brahmacharya*) is a higher life than the married state. By married life I mean the sexual relation between man and woman—not *the married life of Bhagawan Ramakrishna*. His was a married life absolutely free from lust. *His place is higher than that of any sannyasin the world has ever produced, not barring even the founders of the great religions of the world.* It is much easier to be a celibate than to marry and live with one's wife, and at the same time abstain from any carnal connection with her. It is much easier to avoid fire than to live in it and go unscathed. *What spiritual marriage is Sri Ramakrishna alone has revealed to the world.* It is not necessary to speak of any miracle in his life, for a miracle-monger he emphatically was not. *His married life is the greatest miracle the world has to show to man.* Whoever has tried in his life to realise this ideal knows how difficult it is, if not impossible. I know only of one instance that may be cited as *a very faint* parallel. From Porphyry's Letters to Marcella, it appears that the great disciple of Plotinus *perhaps* was successful in realising this ideal, but Porphyry's case is not exactly like that of Ramakrishna, for he married Marcella when he was sixty years old, and Marcella, when wedded to him, was a widow with several children, and they generally lived apart. Why he mentioned Marcella at all cannot be definitely said—platonic love has nothing to do with marriage—nor does his case rest on as clear a proof of absolute spiritual marriage as that of Bhagawan Ramakrishna of hallowed memory. It is very difficult to say why Ramakrishna married. ~ May we not presume that he married in order to show the householders

how married life should be lived, in order that householders might at least strive after the ideal, if they could not fully attain to it ?

As in the complete conquest of lust lies the highest moral life, so does it lie in the complete conquest of greed or in absolute poverty—and absolute poverty without absolute chastity is inconceivable, for a householder with his wife and children must earn money to support his family, but money to him should not be all in all. Bread is necessary, but man should not live by bread alone. You cannot worship God and Mammon at the same time. “The son of man has not where to lay his head.” Here also Ramakrishna is our great exemplar. His fingers actually twisted at the touch of gold and he lived on what came to him without his asking.

What is true of lust and gold is also true of other passions. I have taken them piecemeal for the sake of convenience but they all go together.

I hope I have made my position perfectly clear. Now a question arises, and I have seen this question seriously put. The question is that if total renunciation be the ideal, then the ideal is surely a negative one (*neti-mulak*). Where is joy in this ideal ? Is it not a text of the Upanishads—*Ananda rupam amritam yadvibhati* (That which reveals itself as bliss) and does not the text apply to *Brahman* ? I do not propose to say anything particular about *Brahman* in this paper—*saguna* (with attributes) or *nirguna* (without attributes) ; *sakara* (form-ful) or *nirakara* (formless). Suffice it to say that no earthly joy can compare with the joy of *Mukti* (liberation)—*Yalabdhwā chaparam labham manyate nadhikam tata* (after gaining which there is nothing more for us to gain—after gaining which all desire ceases). Suffice it to say that *I'airagyam* (detachment or renunciation) is the secret of fearlessness, the secret of strength, for all fear arises from *asakti* (attachment)—*Sarvam vastu bhayantitam bhūvi vairagyamevabhyam* (Everything is the cause of fear—it is detachment or renunciation alone that is the secret of fearlessness). This joy of *Mukti*, this fearlessness of *Mukti*, is a fact borne out by the great lives of all emancipated souls. Only we must bear in mind that bliss, joy or *anadam* is the last word of moral life, the last word of *sadhana* (religious exercises)—it is the state of *Moksha* or *Nirvana*. The first imperatives of moral life are negative and they cannot but be so. Eucken

in his *Truth of Religion* has very satisfactorily explained this fact. The first movement of moral or spiritual life is what he calls the negative movement or rejection which is the same thing as *Vairagya Sadhana* in Sanskrit. Mahatma Gandhi did his best to explain this truth to Rabindranath, the æsthetician and Brama-Samajist, in his well-known article, "The Poet's Anxiety," that appeared in his *Young India* sometime ago, but God only knows whether the poet is convinced or not.

It will not do to be in a hurry for *anandam* before we have entered on the very first stage of moral life. We feel *anandam* as we advance, through the ungrudging approval of our conscience—and absolute bliss can but come to a man when *Nirvana* is an accomplished fact. THIS IS THE WISDOM OF INDIA. *Vishayanandam* (fleeting joys arising from the world of sense) must be sharply distinguished from *paramanandam* (the supreme bliss of liberation). "*Brahman is anandam, Brahman is rasa* (joy), *ergo*, for God's sake, eat, drink and be merry" is a sentiment which is the very quintessence of superficiality. Even Mark Tapley could not be jolly in the thriving city of Eden, but our optimists have out-Tapleyed Tapley himself—and to the credit of Tapley, be it said, that he was an honest fellow after all. The moral value of this sort of optimism I leave it to my readers to determine. It will not do to say unctuously :

" God's in His Heaven

All's right with the world."

There is another very amusing objection that is most seriously raised. It is asked in all solemnity : " If absolute chastity with absolute poverty is the ideal and if everyone follows that ideal, then what will become of the world with its man-power, politics, empire, army, navy, commerce, industry, theatre, cinema, music-hall, sports, games—in short, all the hurry and scurry of life ? Evidently these things will clean disappear." It is a very grandfatherly question, no doubt, for our grandfathers in India are very keen on the question of the propagation of the species, and marriage they look upon as a religious duty for all. To this question, the holy men who have renounced all will say in reply : " Well, if such a state of things really comes about, if the world really ceases to function through the practice of unbroken *Brahmacharya* (absolute chastity), then what can be a happier

consummation than this ? If the whole world attains *Mukti* (liberation) in this way, then what more remains to be desired ? The very purpose of life will then have been fulfilled. But as it appears from the tendencies of the times, there is very little apprehension on that score. Propagation of the species is going on at top speed and will most probably go on at this rate till the final dissolution against our will. IT IS THE DOING OF NATURE. The true ideal of life has nothing to do with it."

So far I have tried to show that moral life springs from Pessimism or deep sorrow and deep discontent with Nature, the end of moral life is *Sannyasa* or absolute renunciation and that is why *Sannyasa* is the highest ideal of man. Most people, no doubt, will say that it is a very difficult ideal to follow, and some will go even so far as to say that it is quite impossible. All that can be said in reply is that the difficulty of the ideal is patent to all—*durgam pathastat kavayo vādanti* (strait is the path the sages say) ; were it easy like a joy-ride, it would be no ideal at all, but it is not altogether impossible, because it is a fact that there ARE men who are the embodiments of this ideal though numerically they are but a handful. In the words of Ram Prasad : "One or two only in a million can finish their play and smilingly, O Divine Mother, clapest Thou Thy hands." That being so, some will say : "Why not lower the ideal a little so that it may be possible for many to realise it in life ?" The answer to such would be this : "No, that can never be ; if you lower the ideal, your realisation would be lower still, and man's misery will know no bounds." In the words of Ramakrishna to his disciples : "If I do sixteen annas, then only will you be able to do one anna, but if I do one anna, you will do nothing at all." Suppose a University student wants to pass his examination. If he aims at a first-class, he may take a third-class at least, but if he aims at a third-class, his failure is almost inevitable. He gets ploughed, ten to one, that is all. Let us take care that we never lower the ideal and let us see that we never become such consummate hypocrites as to deny the ideal itself, because it is hard or because we do not find it in the lives of the founders of certain sects to which we may happen to belong. A very strict watch over the mind is absolutely necessary. Let us be kind to others but give no quarter to ourselves. Introspection should pierce our soul as a blade of steel. Let us never seek to justify ourselves but always think of what we are

and what we ought to be, what we are doing and what we ought to do, and what an abysmal chasm lies between the actual and the ideal.

That the ideal is hard was very well-known to the rishis of India, but they never denied or belittled the ideal. On the contrary, their emphasis was here, for they knew very well that *no emphasis is necessary where natural tendency is strong*, that emphasis should lie the other way about. Hegel's In and Through which everybody understands was certainly very well-known to them. Very well did they know that everyone has not the capacity to renounce all and the vast majority of men who are weak must pass through Nature, but what they never tired of repeating was that total renunciation is the ideal we must steadily keep in view and try to control our natural impulses as far as possible, for otherwise, we shall hopelessly degenerate into so many worshippers of Belial and Mammon making the world hideous. Hence comes the Hindu conception of CHATURVARGA (four-fold category)—*dharma* (moral law), *artha* (means), *kama* (desire) and *moksha* (liberation)—the plain meaning of which is that it is by restraining *artha* and *kama* by *dharma* that we should turn the current of our lives towards *Moksha* or liberation, the goal of our lives. Bhagawan Ramakrishna used to tell his householder disciples to "turn the current of their lives" (*mod ferano*). *Grihasthasrama* (the householder's life) should be nothing but this. It has no meaning unless it is in tune with the Absolute, unless we turn our face towards the Great Liberation. Like the conception of *Chatur-varga*, we have the conception of *chatur-asrama* (four-fold stage of life) and the conception of *chatur-varnya* (four-fold caste) according to *guna* (aptitude) and *karma* (work) and not necessarily according to heredity. But what has that great soul got to do with In-and-Through who has subdued and transcended Nature and holds *Moksha* in the hollow of his hand *hastamalakavat* (like the small *amalaki* fruit in one's grasp)—and what right have we to say that everyone must practise In-and-Through so that we may have the satisfaction to see everyone like us? If a man is exceptionally strong, he will do nothing of the kind. If a big jump enables us to get to a place, where, then, is the necessity for wearily trudging all the way? What folly can be greater than this? Evolution in spiritual life any more than evolution in physical life does not necessarily mean gradualism, for Nature does make jumps and does march by leaps

and bounds as nations do in periods of Revolution. It is not only Huxley but De Vries also who thinks so, and the theory of De Vries has been quoted by Bergson in his *Creative Evolution*. William James in his *Varieties of Religious Experience* speaks of slow spiritual progress and quick spiritual progress as well. The former corresponds to the 'lisis', and the latter to the 'crisis' of medical science according to James, and the simile of James here is very appropriate, for it reminds us of what we call *bhava-roga* or 'world-disease' in Bengali.

In our shastras, there are texts in praise of *grihasthasram*, and this is as it should be, if *grihasthasram* is rightly understood ; but there are *Samhitas* (institutes or codes of law-givers) in which *grihasthasram* has been made compulsory for all and has been raised even above *sannyasa* and this, I submit, is wrong and no Hindu can accept such dictum as authoritative, for it is in conflict with the *Śruti* or Vedic revelation, and according to the Hindu canon of exegesis, wherever the *Śruti* clashes with the *Smṛiti*, it is the *Smṛiti* that must go to the wall and the *Śruti* prevail. The clearest *Śruti* text on this subject is *Yadahareva virajeta tadahareva pravrajeta* which means that the moment *vairagya*m dawns upon you, you should adopt *sannyasa*, or in other words, you may become a *sannyasin* without being a house-holder at all. This text has been quoted sometimes by Swami Vivekananda, and that the right interpretation is that given above appears also from the commentary on the text by that profound vedic scholar, Swami Dayananda Saraswati in his *Rig-veda Bhashya Bhumika, T'arnasrama prakarana*, which I bring prominently to the notice of Lala Lajpat Rai, his disciple, who, from his place as President of the Hindu Mahasabha just held at Calcutta, spoke as follows : " No one is allowed to become a *sannyasin* or to undertake the duties of a preacher without having passed through the mill of *grihasthasram*."

As for the superiority of *Sannyasa* over *grihasthasram*, the clearest text is this :

*Meru Sasapayor yat yat*  
*Surya khadyotayoriva,*  
*Sarit Sagarayor yat yat,*  
*Thata blikshu grihasthaya.*

(*Yogopanishad*, sloka 109)

(The difference between a *Sannyasin* and a *Grihi* is to be compared to the difference between the Meru Mountain and the mustard-seed, the sun and the fire-fly, the streamlet and the sea).

Many other texts may be quoted, but the two characteristic texts I have given are enough.

Whether one can become a *Sannyasin* without being a *Grihi* and whether a *Sannyasin* is a higher being than a householder is a very vital question, and its spiritual significance tremendous. The reason why a man talks so glibly about the compulsory character of *grihasthasram* is that he does not care for *Sannyasasram* at all. He knows that a *grihi* always remains a *grihi* under the present circumstances of the country, and that, once in the mill, it is almost impossible for a man to come out of it. It might have been different in the ancient days, but now for a *grihi* to become a *Sannyasin* is nothing short of a miracle. The talk of the compulsory character of *grihasthasrama* is nothing but a dodge to kill *Sannyasa* itself. A man's whole spiritual outlook can be judged by his attitude towards the question as to whether it is permitted to a man to skip *Grihasthasrama* and become a *Sannyasin* at a bound. That is why Mr. C. F. Andrews whom we all love and who is a disciple of Rabindranath—he calls Rabindranath his *Guru-deva* though he appeals now and then to the practical vedanta and Mayavada of Swami Vivekananda—that is why, I say, Mr. C. F. Andrews was quite puzzled and perplexed, for this is a question on which Rabindranath differs from Mahatma Gandhi. Absolute continence is the watch-word of the Mahatma, but Rabindranath must have romance and marriage by all means. So Mr. Andrews, in his perplexity, wrote an article in the *Modern Review* of Calcutta sometime ago and invited authoritative opinion as to the true Hindu view of the question. A certain correspondent, if I remember aright, quoted one of the very texts quoted above and wrote something very much to the point, but in the next issue, another correspondent quoted certain *Smriti* texts in support of Rabindranath, and then the learned editor whose sympathies are well known, in the exercise of his editorial prerogative, closed the discussion with the verdict that Rabindranath is right. Whether Rabindranath is right or the Mahatma is right is a matter I leave to my readers to decide. I only hope that they will weigh all the arguments I have advanced before they come to a conclusion.

*Relative morality, that is, domestic, social, political and business morality has no meaning at all without asceticism as its foundation. The relative presupposes the Absolute.* Yet the most astounding charge ever brought is that asceticism is anti-social. A more erroneous and perverse charge it is hard to conceive. Social welfare will be best secured, if the spirit of asceticism is rightly grasped. What is social justice and political justice without which social and political reform can never be accomplished? It means giving every man his due or in other words *renouncing* one's lion's share so that others may not suffer. *Evil means the principle of individuation* or selfish monopoly. Good means altruism. Renounce you will, however little, for social and political well-being, glibly you will talk of morality, social and political, and yet the fundamental principle of all such morality you will not accept—well, it is an instance of perversity the like of which we fail to see in the whole history of mental aberrations. There is no cause of fear whatever. None of your pet interests—social reform, political agitation, political nationalism, economic progress—none of these things, I am sure, will be left out of account, nay, all these will proceed as smoothly as possible, nothing will go astray, if only we learn to cherish reverence for Total Renunciation—the ideal of ideals. Art will be ennobled and purified by it, and Democracy will be transformed by its magic touch. Art without morality is pornography, and Democracy without reverence is mobocracy. TAKE CARE OF QUALITATIVE REALISATION AND QUANTITATIVE REALISATION WILL TAKE CARE OF ITSELF.

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(To be continued)

## GLEANINGS

WAS ADAM CREATED OUT OF THE 'DUST OF THE GROUND'?

OR DID IT TAKE MILLIONS OF YEARS TO PRODUCE MAN?

**T**HE news that Professor John Scopes, who was tried in Dayton, U. S. A., on the charge of teaching evolution, was found guilty and fined 100 dollars has startled the whole world and roused its indignation. The Judge in his charge to the Jury ruled that if the defendant had violated the law by teaching that man descended from the lower order of animals, he should be convicted. He further added that the question of the denial of the story of creation did not arise. The Jury deliberated for 9 minutes (!) and found the Professor guilty!

The following was published in an American newspaper prior to the Judgment:—

The Bible states with great clearness exactly how God created man—created him then and there in the Garden of Eden; created him full-grown, complete.

But science has reason to believe that man was not created that day or any other day. In fact, science asserted that the human race is the result of millions of years of slow, patient development from the very lowest, shapeless globules of animated jelly which wiggled about in the prehistoric ponds and oceans of ancient times.

What the Holy Scriptures say must be true, and to teach school children that man developed from lower forms of animal life is a crime punishable by fine and imprisonment, according to the law of the State of Tennessee. And thus it has come about that Professor John T. Scopes a teacher in the high school in Dayton, Tennessee, has been arrested and will be put on trial for using a text-book in his classroom which says that geology teaches that the simple forms of animal life of millions of years ago became more complex "and culminated with a group which contains man himself."

But the entire world of modern science stands aghast at the spectacle of a school teacher being prosecuted for putting before his pupils one of the fundamental corner stones of scientific knowledge. Socrates was made to drink a cup of poison because he taught things in advance of his times, Galileo was forced to take back his statement that the earth moves around the sun, Copernicus had to flee for his life for discovering what is now the basis of modern astrology, Columbus was called a madman and driven from the council of Padua for "pretending that it was possible to sail around the world."

These men wisely submitted to the ignoramuses in power, but Giordano Bruno said once too often that the world goes round the sun and was burned at the stake; Spinoza, the great philosopher, was denounced and threatened by the government of Holland for new thoughts about the universe; Roger Bacon, England's first scientist, spent fourteen years in jail for inventing spectacles, gunpowder and new thoughts; Eufame Macalyane was burned to death in Scotland for trying to ease the pains of childbirth, and the first doctors to use anaesthetics had to "bootleg" chloro-form to their patients at the risk of life and liberty.

Modern American scientists read of these ancient persecutions as part of the dark ages, like the burning of witches, and never dreamed that anything

of the kind could happen in this enlightened day. When Mr. William J. Bryant denounced them as "scoundrels" for their evolution and Mr. Voliva, of Zion City, raged and called down the wrath of Heaven because they still teach that the world is round and not flat, as he insists, they thought it a joke and kept right on making their discoveries and publishing them.

The news that laws to make it a crime to teach anything that might be construed as contrary to anything in the Bible were being agitated seemed to them too fantastic to be taken seriously. When they heard that such a law had actually been passed in Tennessee, still they were not disturbed. They knew that this country has many preposterous laws, which nobody pretends could be enforced, and Governor Peay, of Tennessee, was reported to have said when he signed the bill that here was another dead letter law.

Then like a bomb-shell came the arrest of Professor John T. Scopes in Dayton, Tennessee, and they wonderingly read the papers to learn what awful thing he had taught to corrupt the high school pupils of that little town.

Elsewhere on this page is the reproduction of the page of the text-book which Professor Scopes used in his classroom. For using these seemingly inoffensive words he has been arrested and held for trial. The book itself, "A Civic Biology," written by Professor George W. Hunter<sup>†</sup> was approved and adopted by the State Text Book Commission before the passage of the law and had been in use since 1919. Therefore Professor Scopes' "crime" consists in having taught from a book provided him by the very State that now proposes to punish him.

The scientists at first could not see what the fuss was all about, but Mr. William J. Bryan, who is generally given the credit for the anti-evolution law, came forward and triumphantly explained. If man was a product of evolution, then Adam could not have been created by the Almighty in one day and Eve could not have been made out of one of the ribs as told in the Bible. Therefore any man who taught evolution to children disputed the Scriptural narrative and must be punished.

Not only scientists, but inventors, researchers of every kind and all people who believe in the right of free thought and speech were stunned at the news. If this law proved valid and constitutional, then what else might they expect? No Scientist would be safe, they thought. If Professor Beebe, now dredging the bottom of the Pacific Ocean, brings up something that someone might not think agreed with a strict interpretation of the Scriptures, it would be safer for him to quietly throw it back again and say nothing.

Publishers of school books are wondering how they can meet such a law. The custom has always been to have these books written by experts in each field, but in scientific subjects such as biology, the only experts are scientists, and it would be hard to find a man of standing in that field who does not accept evolution just as he does the law of gravitation.

For such an authority to deny evolution or pretend to account for things on some other basis would convict him of dishonesty and make him ridiculous in the eyes of fellow scientists. Dr. Hunter, for instance, who wrote the book which got Prof. Scopes into trouble with the law, is professor of biology in Knox College, Illinois, and was formerly head of the department of biology of the De Witt Clinton School in New York City. He is a man of very high

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<sup>†</sup>Run for Presidency of U. S. A. thrice but never reached the goal, and who passed away just before the trial—Ed., V. K.

standing and yet it is such men as he that Mr. Bryan has called "dishonest scoundrels." Apparently the books for Tennessee will have to be written by some layman unhampered by too much knowledge of the subject.

The law which Professor Scopes violated was passed at the last session of the Tennessee Legislature, and became effective March 21 of this year, when Governor Austin Peay signed the bill. The preamble designates it as an act "prohibiting the teaching of the evolutionary theory in all universities, normal and all other schools supported in whole or in part by public school funds of the State."

The act continues, "that it shall be a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of \$ 100 to \$ 500, to teach any theory that denies the story of the Divine creation of man as taught in the Bible, and to teach instead that man is descended from the lower animals."

The law, while deplored in some parts of the State, is very popular in others, especially the mountainous and other wild districts, where the percentage of illiteracy is higher than in almost any other part of the country. In these areas the anti-evolution propaganda made a strong impression, and the people are convinced that "scientific scoundrels" are trying to destroy their Bible and teaching little children that they came from monkeys.

By a curious twist of fate, Professor Scopes, the accused, and Mr. Bryan, the great propagandist and sponsor of the movement against evolution, were both born in Salem, Illinois. In that same State is Knox College, where Dr. Hunter, author of "Civic Biology," is teaching that science. Professor Scopes is a young man, and like most teachers and scientists has scanty funds of his own, but he will not need them. Hundreds of indignant people from all over the country have telegraphed and written assurances of help.

Roger N. Baldwin, director of the American Liberties Union, has stated that the organization would finance his defense. Clarence Darrow the famous Chicago criminal lawyer, and Dudley Field Malone of New York, sent the following telegram to Professor Scopes' lawyer :

"Judge John Randolph Neal,  
Knoxville, Tenn.

"We are certain you need no assistance in your defense of Professor Scopes, who is to be prosecuted for teaching evolution, but we have read the report that William Jennings Bryan has volunteered to aid the prosecution, and in view of the fact that scientists are so much interested in the pursuit of knowledge that they cannot make the money that lecturers and Florida real estate agents command, in case you need us, we are willing, without fees or expenses, to help the defense of Professor Scopes in any way you may suggest or direct.

"CLARENCE DARROW

"DUDLEY FIELD MALONE."

On the other side will be arrayed equally imposing legal talent, and Mr. Bryan himself wants to make a speech.

It has often been pointed out that in former times the people themselves took a hand in the burnings and other persecutions largely because they made a great spectacle and furnished free public entertainment and excitement. These symptoms are visible in the tiny town of Dayton, which has suddenly been made

world famous by this case. For days there was delighted talk of the great doings that would be seen and heard when the case came to trial, and the only sad thing was that the little Court house could hold but a small fraction of the eager inhabitants of the countryside.

When it was reported that the big show might be transferred to Chattanooga or some other large city, the enthusiasts of Dayton were furious, and demanded that the case be tried right in their own town. So jealous is Dayton of the excitement and publicity that it has promised to build a temporary "hotel" to house the crowd that is sure to arrive. A resolution was drawn up threatening to boycott the Chattanooga tradesmen unless they ceased trying to steal their case from them.

The slow machinery of the law in Dayton was speeded up so that Professor Scopes might be put on trial in Dayton before some other community could get up a monkey case of its own.

At one of the Dayton indignation meetings Dr. Rappleyea, a physician and chemist, who has been a strong supporter of Professor Scopes, tried to explain to the multitude just what evolution is. He got no farther than the statement that man's ancestors were among the lower animals. At this point Thurlow Reed, a barber of the town, considered it a reflection on himself and his family, leaped upon the platform and started a fist fight with the doctor.

These mountaineers carry guns, and don't mind using them on occasion, so Darrow and Malone are perhaps taking some chances when they try to make the same statement, especially after Mr. Bryan has roused their fury.

It is a little hard to understand sometimes what it was in their teaching that caused the ancients to be put to death or otherwise persecuted. Socrates, considered one of the greatest minds and wisest men of all time, was forced to drink poison because "he corrupted the youth"—the very charge that is now being brought against the modern scientists. Yet even Mr. Bryan makes no objection to the teachings of Socrates, which the much bored college youth is to-day forced to translate from the Greek. The only complaint is by the boys themselves that the stuff is difficult and uninteresting.

Mr. Bryan, in claiming that the faith of the modern boy had been undermined and not at all like the youth of his time, was confronted by a statement of Mark Twain's, written long ago, in which he told of a schoolboy who gave a definition of faith as: "believing something you know ain't so."

Perhaps the most incredible of all persecutions, because it worked to the disadvantage of everybody, was the hounding of the doctors and others who introduced the blessing of anæsthetics. Nowadays everyone who has to undergo an operation for any other reason endure great pain, takes it as a matter of course that his physician will do all he can with ether, chloroform gas, cocaine, twilight sleep or some pain killer to relieve his suffering. One would hardly guess that anæsthetics were for a long time met with the bitterest fanatical opposition.

In 1591 long before the days of chloroform and ether, some sort of anaesthetic must have been known and used secretly in Scotland, because in that year Eufame Macalyane, a lady of rank and position, was accused of trying to get another woman to give her something to ease the pains of child-birth. She was tried, convicted and duly burned to death on the Castle Hill at Edinburgh, and great crowds watched and approved.

Scotch people of that day believed that the Almighty had laid a curse on woman because of Eve's misbehaviour, and that any attempt to mitigate woman's labour was trying to escape from the curse and therefore wicked. This was long ago, but the idea persisted in full force right up to the middle of the nineteenth century, when Dr. James Young Simpson, a physician far in advance of his times, advocated the use of chloroform at child birth in certain cases, just as it is given to-day. Instantly he was threatened with imprisonment and even his life was in danger on the same logic which had caused Eufame Macalyane to be burned.

Dr. Simpson was a canny Scot himself and met his persecutors with arguments as ridiculous as their own, and finally beat them by calling attention to the twenty-first verse of the second chapter of Genesis which relates that when God took the rib out of Adam in order to create Eve he caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam. Clearly this "deep sleep" was an anaesthetic of some sort. On the strength of that reasoning they allowed anaesthetics in Scotland.

In the United States and other countries the persecution of the angels of mercy who introduced these drugs died out, not so much on account of arguments but because people in agony demanded relief whether it was wicked or not. It is knowledge of things like this that have been done to scientists in the quite recent past which has made them anxious to see that the Scopes case is carried, if necessary, to the highest courts.

There was a time when the scientists could be hounded and driven out of a country without much harm but no longer. To-day our health and our daily bread depends on their activities. America's foreign trade depends on American manufacturer's ability to produce goods as cheaply as foreign nations can, even with their cheaper labour, and that, in turn, depends on the ability of our scientists to keep abreast of the others in improving processes of manufacture. Any persecution that would hamper these inventive minds or drive them to other countries would be a disaster such as sent Spain from the top of the European nations to the bottom of the list.

The only reason the scientist is in any more danger from the law than the rest of us is because there is an organised drive and propaganda against him. Elihu Root, one of America's greatest lawyers, commenting on the American habit of passing a law every time a crank or fanatic gets an idea, said recently :

"This country has reached a point where it is impossible for any American lawyer to know the law."

Yet ignorance of the law is no defense. The average citizen goes about violating the laws right and left. The only things that save him is the fact that the police can't know the laws either and that there would not be prisons enough to hold us all if they did.

But the "monkey-law" of Tennessee is now a well-advertised law, and if this law is upheld and Professor Scopes is punished the school children in that State will grow up in ignorance of one of the great fundamentals of science—unless wicked wise ones from outside the State "bootleg" the forbidden knowledge to them.

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## EDITORIAL NOTES

### RELIGION AS THE FULFILMENT OF SCIENCE

ONCE a Jesuit Father was telling his students in a science class how planets have arisen out of stars and stars out of nebulae ; at that one of the students objected, "How, Father, you spoke to us only the other day about Genesis and said that God created the earth, moon and stars out of nothing !" The Jesuit Father coolly replied : "That is religion, my boy, and this is science."

Indeed ! This sort of mentality is commonly prevalent among the people to whom religion is a matter of faith, and as such, it owes no allegiance to reason. The common contention of such people is that, in as much as the basic principles of religion are spiritual entities, no finite reason of man can approach them. Truths of religion and the origin of things, being transcendental by their very nature, can at best be facts of revelation only and no reason or human intellect can catch them. From the very beginning of the history of the religious institutions of the human society the theologians tried to lay a strong emphasis upon this point and exploited the credulity of the people to their own benefit. But time and again we have noticed with the march of human progress the reason of man raising a note of protest against such undue claims for faith.

As a result of such conflict between faith and reason the human society has often suffered from severe catastrophes. Even to-day, in this scientific age, when the voice of reason has gathered strength and volume enough to maintain its own against all onslaughts of faith, one witnesses instances like the Tennessee case where a science professor is punished for preaching the truths of science\*, because they are against the so-called revelations of religion.

In this confusion and conflict and the fume of rage that arises out of blind eagerness to save their party at any cost against the opponent, the respective votaries of both Reason and Faith, Science and Religion, lose sight of one fundamental fact of human knowledge that it is the human mind that comprehends the Truth. It is the mind that feels the Truth by the stretch of its emotion and faith, or determines it through the

\*Vide GLEANINGS.

intellectual process of analysis and classification. And as in a healthy organism the left-hand can never have any quarrel with the right, so in a properly developed mind faith or emotion can never wage war against reason. Only in a pathological subject we notice the disharmony between reason and feeling ; and we call such a man insane. Similarly, in a civilized society, if such disharmony is noticeable in its thought-life, it must be taken as a sure indication of morbidity and lopsided development.

In the western world, since the days of Giuardino Bruno, rationalism has been at perpetual war with the cult of faith of the theologians. Many a valiant battle was fought ; and it was not unoften that the theologians, with the sceptred power at their back, were victorious. But the human mind has a peculiar partiality for Truth, तत्त्वपक्षपाति हि बुद्धिः. So, with the growth of mind and development of reason, observation and scrutiny of facts of life and nature became unavoidable. And as a natural consequence of this expansion of human intellect, science slowly gained ground in the popular mind ; and the old faith of theology was often startled by its wonderful discoveries. Many a crudity of the doctrines and dogmas of the scriptures was reduced to dust by its sledge hammer blows and the main religions of the Semitic race themselves got rude shocks. And to-day we find in the whole of Christendom an attempt being made for a compromise that 'religion is religion and science is science and you shall never mix the twain'—an average Christian of to-day never allows his doctrinal faith to be disturbed by its logical issues being raked up by science, nor does he allow his political and civic life to be much interfered with by the creed and doctrines of the church. He has conveniently made two separate watertight compartments in life, as life secular and life religious. And perhaps that is the very reason why we witness to-day in the Western world that the spiritual elements of the religion of Christ have failed to produce any tangible effect upon the general character of the people, and religion has ever remained with them a matter of mere faith, an emotional assent. But they have developed wonderful civic virtues based upon the truths of science. And that has made their physical life more pronounced and assertive than the spiritual.

But in India we find quite a different order of things. Though the religion of the Vedas, no doubt, was proclaimed as

facts of revelation of the Rishis and as such transcendental and absolute in its fundamental basis, nowhere it was claimed for the Rishis, unlike the founders of other religions, a monopoly of these revelations. On the other hand it was proclaimed that the religion of the Vedas stand on the eternal verities of life and their revelations can come to any man who would raise himself high enough to reach them. It is the natural outcome of the growth of human mind ; and in that respect the Sanathana Dharma of the Vedas is as much a revealed religion as natural. Every man is born an heir to these revelations, it is his birthright, only he must acquire it. The religion of the Vedas further proclaimed that its truths are not to be accepted on trust, but should be verified. Nay, it is no religion if it ends only in faith and is not realized through experience. God, soul, and other spiritual verities are as much, nay, much more, facts of actual experience as any truths of modern empirical science. So the religion of the Vedas has thrown out the challenge to the whole world, and for all time, for the verification of its facts. Therefore the sages of India have conclusively proved to the world by their own life and precept that there is no real conflict between reason and religion. They have shown that religion means nothing but a serious attempt of the human soul to find its safe haven after the stormy and tribulous voyage of this life. The rudimentary note of all religions is the same as what is prayed for by the Vedic sage—

अस्तो मा सद्गम्य तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय मृत्योर्मांमृतंगमय ।

" Take me from the unreal to the real, from darkness to light, from the mortal to the immortal. " In fact this is also the fundamental search of all life, of all souls ; and its fulfilment is the goal of religion, and of science as well.

Man, from the very moment of his birth, finds himself in perpetual bondage, limitations, and darkness of ignorance, and the history of his whole life is but a history of an unremitting struggle to break these bonds, transcend these limitations, and dispel the ignorance ; and the Vedas say that the culmination of this struggle of life lies in the realization of the infinity of the life principle itself. The bondages and limitations of life arise from the ignorance of the eternal principles that underlie all life and existence ; and their realization means their actual knowledge, or in other words, making them the permanent factors of our consciousness. From this it becomes clear that the religion that promises salvation to man

cannot fight shy of reason, the most important faculty of the human mind, and rest on faith alone. If the truths of religion must be *realized* by the human mind, they must sink deep into human consciousness and become permanent factors of it, which process means a full satisfaction of, and mutual harmony among, all the three principal faculties of mind, emotion, reason, and volition—a harmony among the emotional, practical, and thought aspects of life.

आत्मा वा अरे ब्रह्म्यः श्रोतव्यो मन्तव्यो निदिध्यासितव्यः ।

—*Brahādaranyaka Upanishad.*

"The Atman has to be seen (realized) ; it has to be heard, intellectually determined, and then meditated upon." In this dictum of the Vedic sage is embodied the entire truth of the Vedic religion. The Atman, the basic principle of life, the reality of all realities, the First Principle, has to be *seen*. That is the goal of religion ; and that glorious vision dawns when the mind is disciplined and purified by *śravaṇa* (hearing), *manana* (argumentation) and *nididhyāsana* (meditation). And before the mind could take up the Atman as its sole object of meditation, it must be satisfied intellectually about the reality of the Atman ; and for that purpose *manana* or ratiocination is absolutely necessary. Before mind could assume the calm serenity of meditation its doubts and delusions must be dispelled by the help of Reason. All the great philosophers of India entered into their philosophical disquisitions with this sole object in view, to find out the logical basis of the truths of revelation, to help *manana*, and never with the idea of indulging in empty speculation and intellectual flight. Therein lies the great difference between Indian systems of philosophy and other schools. Here philosophy is made a handmaid to religion ; whereas the other schools like those of Europe remained satisfied with mere speculation and never touched the practical life of man. And that is the reason why we find in the Vedic religion such a wonderful harmony between faith and reason, between emotion and judgment, between principle and practice of philosophy.

श्रद्धाभक्तियोगाद्देहि

—*Kaivalya Upanishad.*

"Know Him by faith, devotion, knowledge, and the mystic communion"—This is the injunction of the Vedas.

The most recent findings of modern science can be summed up in the following words : (1) life is a continuum ;

(2) unity and indestructibility of matter ; (3) visibility in its effect but invisibility in its essence, *i. e.*, its dual visage of the knowable and the unknowable ; and (4) things are not what they seem, *i. e.*, the delusion of the senses. The details apart, the material science has reached the point in its scrutiny where matter has begun to elude its grasp : generally speaking there is not a shadow of doubt to-day in the mind of the scientist that the entity which goes by the name of matter and whose effect and expression are so palpable to the human senses is in itself perfectly inscrutable. But one thing is certain that there can be no *creation* in the strictest sense of the term. This universe of sense perception is but an unbroken series of phenomena or expressions of that primal substance without any beginning or end. Our observation or experience is but a snatch at a link of that entire endless chain. The phenomenon or the expression may be explainable in relation to its environment, but its central core remains always undeciphered. Erstwhile ago scientists thought themselves perfectly secure within the fortification of their empirical method and felt sure that they would be able to vanquish all superstition and ignorance of the spiritualists by unravelling the heart of matter. But their earnest search for the Real has all on a sudden produced an Instiegn who with the same weapon of empiricism has begun to demolish the fort of empirical science. So, naturally, the open-minded scientists, whose minds are not trammelled by the scientific supersitions, have begun to feel their position shaky, so far as the possibility of determining the ultimate truth of matter with the aid of this empirical method is concerned. But the *terra firma* of modern science is in its determination of the interrelations of the different aspects of this phenomenal world, and their practical value in work-a-day life.

The Vedic Rishis, thousands of years before, came exactly to the same conclusions in regard to the phenomenal world. Like the modern scientists they first declared

यदि जगत्सर्वं प्राण एवैति नित्यम्

—*Katha Upanishad.*

"Whatever exists in this world of change, all have come out of the vibration of *prana*." *Prana*, the primal energy, vibrated, became kinetic and the world of phenomena issued forth. The multiplicity of phenomena is but in appearance, due to different degrees of vibration : the same energy assumes the

form of matter, light, heat, electricity, and various other forms in its different range of vibrations.

य एकोऽवर्णो बहुधा शक्तियोगात् वर्णानेकान् निहितायौ दधाति

—*Swetaswathara Upanishad.*

“Himself, though one and colourless, but appears as many and of varied colours in conjunction with His power.” Further, like the modern scientists, the Vedic sages found that life is but a continuation of a long chain of sentient existence, at one end of which is a tiny blade of grass and at the other end the perfect souls like the Buddha-man or the Christ-man. Evolution of species through the process of self-preservation and self-determination by fighting with the environments was already a known fact to them as a natural conclusion of their general spiritual theory of evolution. In that they went far beyond the point the modern evolutionists are scrambling to reach. With them evolution was not only true with species, but also with individual members of a species, without which the plan and purpose of evolution itself becomes meaningless and infructuous. In determining the relative value of the phenomena of matter they were not a whit behind the modern scientists. On the other hand, their absolute valuation of the transcendental saved them from the apotheosis of matter and made it possible to keep their eyes clear to see the really Real. In their keener penetration into the heart of matter they found that Energy works not only as physical forces of attraction and repulsion, but also appears as thought and emotion in the psychical world, and so they gave it an all-comprehensive name, *prana*, which means the energising factor of all objects, living and non-living, and thus did solve finally the problem that is haunting the modern scientists as to whether the ultimate state of matter is corpuscular or homogeneous, ponderable or imponderable. To them mind appeared as much material as any other object of the physical nature. In their intuitive grasp of things Matter revealed itself in its true colour and they discerned it to be nothing more than a mere series of phenomena or expressions, a chain of changes—*Shāḍavikari*, i. e., consisting of the sixfold change, viz., origin, continuation, augmentation, disintegration, mutation, and destruction. And that is why they gave this material world the name *Jagat*. Within this definition of matter of the Vedic sages there come naturally all the verities of the physical as well as the psychological world. There remains only one element of human

experience that refuses to come within this category of matter owing to its inherent immutable nature and that is the principle of pure consciousness of man which forms the veritable basis of all experiences, subjective and objective; and therefore they called this immutable principle of consciousness spirit or *chit* in contradistinction to the mutable matter.

Even the empirical demonstrations of modern science have made it perfectly clear that the heart of substance of a thing is quite different from its outward expression, its outward form, and its values in the relative usage are not at all determined by, or commensurate to, its inner reality. The single example of diamond and charcoal will make our point perfectly clear to our readers. There is a perfect order and interrelation between an object and an object in this world of expressions. Yet these relativities never explain the thing itself in reality. The modern scientist as well as the modern philosopher has to acknowledge it at every step of his holy pilgrimage to the temple of the Truth. And exactly this is the thing that the Vedic thinkers proclaimed from the housetop even in that pre-historic age— वाचास्पृश्यो विज्ञानो नामधेयम् । “In name only does exist the truth of transmutation,” i. e., the reality of the so-called change and expressions has no absolute value and is a mere delusion of words. The appearance is but a delusion, *Maya*, inexplicable in terms of reality. So we see the grand *Maya* theory of the Vedantins is being corroborated by the modern scientists in each step of their advancement towards the fundamental. “Things are not what they seem.”

The only difference that exists between the ancient Vedantic thinkers and the modern scientists lies in the estimate of values. Both are one in accepting the human mind as the only instrument of adjudicating truths. As truth or reality is essentially a matter of human consciousness and its value lying in its bearing upon the human life, there cannot be any room for make-belief, hearsay, or empty faith in the determination of the Real. Religion must be a science of God—the ultimate reality of all things, and as such there should be no quarrel between religion and science. It is true that the soul of religion, God, is a transcendental entity and therefore beyond the reach of all intellect and reason, but it is the reason itself which tells us so. It is the human reason that says that God is beyond its reach— नायमात्मा प्रवचनेन लभ्य न मेधया ।



" This Atman cannot be attained by discourse and disquisition, nor by intellect, nor by much scholarship. " Hence religion means through reason to beyond reason, through science to beyond science. Modern science remains satisfied with the relative values and does not bother itself much about the absolute value. But life is not wholly mechanical, its forward quest is constantly urging it on to a point which is absolute in its nature and therefore we find the modern science, though able to get some creature comforts to mankind and remove many of its disabilities, yet has completely failed to give any permanent solace and stability of life to man. So it is high time for the scientist to own his own limitations and make peace with religion, and the religionist must extend his hand of love and sympathy to the scientist and declare that religion is not inimical to science, but is its natural fulfilment.

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### AN APPEAL

The Ramakrishna Mission, Madras, has opened a Free Dispensary for the poor of the locality on the premises of the Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras. We request the charitable public to contribute their mite in money and medicine for the Dispensary. All contributions to be sent to the President, Ramakrishna Mission, Mylapore, Madras.

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[NOTE:—The Sruti gives here the description of the creation of the world in a very peculiar fashion and quite different from what are spoken of in other parts of the Vedic literature such as the Samhitas, Aranyakas and other Upanishads ; and therefore it needs a clear understanding.

To an orthodox Hindu, the entire body of truths contained in the Vedas is of divine revelation, and as such, there can be no scope for self-contradiction in the Vedas. So all the orthodox commentators of Vedic literature, however divergent their views might be according to the respective schools they belonged, are all unanimous in accepting *ekavakyata* or uniformity as the supreme basic rule of exegesis so far as the Vedic literature is concerned.

Looking it from that point of view, it is but natural that commentators like Sankara, Sayana and others should take the process of creation as described in this Sruti, as a *secondary* creation following the primary, i.e., the *bhuta srishti* or the creation of the elementary principles as described elsewhere in the Vedas.

Other critical students who never care for the *ekavakyata* rule, take as usual the *prima facie* meaning of this Sruti and find in it nothing but the flight of crude imaginings of the primitive mind. But to us it seems that the truth lies in neither of these.

All students of the Vedic literature who approach the subject with becoming reverence and traditional culture (*Guruparampara*) cannot fail to notice two things in the Vedic utterances, specially in its *Jnana Kanda*. The first point is that to explain matters of spiritual import the Vedic Rishis, like all other ancient thinkers, use profusely figures and imageries according to the then belief of things ; and secondly, the authors never meant these figures and imageries to be taken as real facts of life or of prime value, but that they should serve *only* to illustrate some higher and subtler spiritual truths which are ordinarily very hard to be understood.

\* We find two kinds of views obtaining in the Vedas about the creation and the worlds (*lokas*). One is the gross and concrete conception proceeding from the plane of sense perceptions. From this stand-point, the Vedic thinkers no

doubt, held the geo-centric view of the world, and the entire universe was conceived as a fourteen-storied mansion, the *chaturdasa bhuvanam*, one above the other. Our own earth, the *bhurloka*, denized by mortal man, stands in the middle of these flights of worlds. The six upper ones are called heavens and the seven lower ones are designated as *pathalas* or nether regions. The sky or the intermediary space is the next higher world to the world of man ; the next higher is the *Suvarloka*, the celestial world of the bright ones, of which the Sun, Moon, and Stars form parts ; then there are higher and higher worlds up to the Seventh, the *Satyloka* or the world of Brahma, the highest heaven. Of these seven heavens including man's world, the first three are most commonly met with in the Vedic literature as they are more intimately connected with an ordinary man's life and the progress of the soul. The names of the other heavens are incidentally mentioned in the Vedas. But the names of the *pathalas* or the nether regions are seldom met with in the principal Upanishads and Aranyakas. But they have been described in detail in the Puranas and other post-vedic literature.

From this stand-point, the higher worlds above *Suvarloka* are called or designated here in the Sruti as *ambha* or the world of celestial waters. Probably the name was suggested from the blue colour of the higher sky and also from the popular belief that rain came from the higher region. The *Suvarloka* or *dyuloka*, the shining heaven, is the next where the shining ones, the *devatas*, live ; and that is called here as the support of the *ambhaloka*, as it is supposed to be immediately below the latter. The intermediary space or the sky which is just above our head is the next world through which play the rays of light, and that is why it is called *marichi* here. Our earth is called the mortal world, as every creature of this world is liable to death. The nether regions are named here as *ap* or the world of water. Probably the name was suggested by the old belief that the waters of the ocean descend up to the nadir and pervade the entire nether worlds. But all these are based upon the crude popular beliefs of the time.

But the higher view of the Vedas regarding creation and the worlds is, in the first place, that there has been no creation ;

the manifestation of the visible is but a changed expression of the inner reality, Brahman, which is the fundamental principle and the fundamental substance as well. Creation means nothing else but evolution of *nama* and *rupa* from the unmanifested. And this evolution, although may have some pragmatic value, has no absolute reality in it, it is only a phenomenon, an aberration of experience. How could the absolute Brahman, one without a second, indivisible and infinite in nature, mutate into the gross physical world? The whole thing is a false reading of the Reality. Matter itself is but a shadow (*chhaya*), a glory (*mahima*), a power (*Sakti*), the Maya of the Supreme Being. Creation and the physical world are true only so far as man's physical life is concerned. But if things can be seen from the standpoint of the inner core of reality which is called in the Vedanta the *Atman* then the whole universe with all its manifold layers of expression would appear as so many concentric circles around that one common centre the *Paramatman*. All the fourteen worlds mentioned above are but so many planes of consciousness, each with the varied contents of its own. The grossest world is the outermost circle, receded farthest from the centre; and the subtlest the *Brahmaloka* or *Saryaloka* as it is called sometimes, the plane of *Hiranyagarbha*, is the innermost circle. These fourteen planes range in their subtlety or grossness as they approach to, or recede away from the centre, the *Atman*.]

स ईक्षतेमे नु लोका लोकपालान्नु सृजा इति ।

सोऽद्भ्य एव पुरुषं समुद्घृत्यामूर्च्छयन् ॥ ३ ॥

सः he (पुनः again) ईक्षत meditated, इमे these लोकाः worlds नु assuredly (विनेद्येयुः will perish) लोकपालान् the rulers of the worlds सृजे shall create इति thus, सः he अद्भ्यः from water एव surely पुरुषं Purusha समुद्घृत्य having raised अमूर्च्छयत् gave form.

He again meditated: these worlds (will perish without rulers), so I must create their rulers. Then He raised the Purusha from water and gave him form.

[From water—i.e., from the unmanifested causal condition of matter.

*Purusha*—the Virat Purusha]

तमभ्यतपत्स्यामितसत्त्वं मुखं निरभिद्यत यथाऽण्डम् मुखाद्वाग्वाचो-  
ऽग्निर्नासिके निरभिद्येतां नासिकाभ्यां प्राणः प्राणाद्वायुरक्षिणी निरभिद्येता-  
मक्षीभ्यां चक्षुश्चक्षुष आदित्यः कर्णौ निरभिद्येतां कर्णाभ्यां श्रोत्रं श्रोत्रादि-  
शस्त्वब् निरभिद्यत त्वचो लोमानि लोमभ्य ओषधिवनस्पतयो हृदयं निर-  
भिद्यत हृदयान्मनो मनसश्चन्द्रमा नाभिर्निरभिद्यत नाभ्या अपानोऽपानान्मृत्युः  
शिश्रं निरभिद्यत शिश्राद्रेतो रेतस आपः ॥ ४ ॥

॥ इति प्रथमः खण्डः ॥

(सः that Atman) तं on that अभ्यतपत् brooded, अमितसत्त्वं तस्य  
of that thus brooded on मुखं the mouth निरभिद्यत came out यथा as  
अण्डं in egg. मुखात् from mouth वाक् speech, वाचः from speech अग्निः  
fire, नासिके the nostrils निरभिद्येतां came out, नासिकाभ्यां from the nostrils  
प्राणः the smell, प्राणात् from the smell वायुः the air. अक्षिणी the two eyes  
निरभिद्येतां came out, अक्षिभ्यां from the two eyes चक्षुः the sight, चक्षुषः  
from the sight आदित्यः the sun. कर्णौ the two ears निरभिद्येतां opened  
out, कर्णाभ्यां from the ears श्रोत्रं the hearing, श्रोत्रात् from the sense of  
hearing दिशः the quarters, त्वक् the skin निरभिद्यत came out, त्वचः  
from the skin लोमानि the hairs, लोमभ्यः from the hairs ओषधिवनस्पतयः  
the herbs and the plants. हृदयं the heart निरभिद्यत sprang forth,  
हृदयात् from the heart मनः the mind, मनसः from the mind चन्द्रमाः  
the moon. नाभिः the navel निरभिद्यत came out, नाभ्यां from the navel  
अपानः the *apana*, अपानात् from the *apana* मृत्युः death. शिश्रं the gene-  
rative organ निरभिद्यत came out, शिश्रात् from the organ रेतः the seed,  
रेतसः from the seed आपः water.

Then the Atman brooded on him, and when he was  
thus brooded upon there burst forth the mouth as of an egg.  
From the mouth came out speech, from speech *agni*.

There came out the two nostrils, from the nostrils the  
smell, from the smell the air.

There sprang forth the eyes, from the eyes sight,  
from sight the sun.

There came out the two ears, from the ears hearing,  
from the hearing the quarters.

There came out the skin, from the skin the hairs, from  
the hairs the herbs and trees.

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

" Let the lion of Vedanta roar."

" Let me tell you, strength, strength is what we want  
And the first step in getting strength is to uphold  
The Upanishads and believe that ' I am the Atman'."

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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## PRAYER

या मामाजन्म विनयत्यतिदुःखमार्गैः  
आसंसिद्धेः स्वकलितैर्ललितैर्विलासैः ।  
या मे बुद्धिं सुविदधे सततं धरण्याम्  
साम्बा सर्वा मम गतिः सफलेऽफले वा ॥

SHE, Who, since birth, has ever led me on  
Through paths of trouble to perfection's goal,  
Mother-wise, in Her own sweet playful ways ;  
She, Who has always through my life inspired  
My understanding ; She, my Mother ! She.  
The All, is my resort, whether my work  
O'erflow with full fruition, or with none.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

## GOSPEL OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

[PANIHATI FESTIVAL, 1883]

### I

**I**T is one o'clock, Monday, the 18th June of 1883. Sri Ramakrishna is dancing among the devotees at the Panihati Festival.

It is known as the 'Flattened Rice Festival,' celebrated annually on the thirteenth day of the bright fortnight of the month of *Jyaistha*. Inaugurated by 'Servant' Raghunath, it was perpetuated by Raghav Pandit. 'Servant' Raghunath was heir to a princely fortune, but his heart being averse to worldly joys, he would often escape the vigilance of his father to visit Sri Gouranga and seek for his permission to renounce the world. But Sri Gouranga would as often send him back, until he was convinced of his sincerity, when he accepted him as a monastic disciple. It was during one of those surreptitious visits that Nityananda one day challenged him, saying, "You thief, you often come here stealthily to taste of the Divine Love, and we know nothing of it ! To-day you shall be punished for this,—you will have to feast the devotees by offering flattened rice to the Lord."

Our Master has been attending this festival almost every year. This year also arrangements had been made for his going there with Ram and other devotees. Ram arrived at Dakshineswar in the morning and, after dinner, drove over with the Master to the festival in the carriage which he had brought from Calcutta. Rakhal, M., Bhavanath and two other devotees also went with them.

All the way the Master was full of fun and merriment. But the moment he arrived at the festival, a great change came over him. He left the carriage and ran rapidly towards a singing party which S. Navadwip

Goswami was leading to the temple of Raghava. Ram and other devotees hastened after him, and after a long search, found him at the centre of the huge assembly dancing in profound ecstasy, and often losing himself in Samadhi. S. Navadvip Goswami was carefully guarding his person.

It is indeed an entrancing vision. Huge crowds are pouring in to catch a glimpse of this divine vision, and everywhere rise triumphant shouts in the name of the Lord, like the tumults of a raging sea. And the devotees throw flowers and sweets at the sacred feet of the Master.

Coming down to the normal plane, the Master sings:

"Behold, yonder come the two brothers who melt into tears at the very mention of the Lord's name !

"They dance themselves in bliss divine and set all the world dancing in ecstatic madness. And lo ! when they cry, the whole world cries with them !

"And even though cruel hands are laid on them, they do ever stretch their arms in love ineffable !"

Singing, the Master dances and all the devotees dance with him ; and perchance they feel that the very presence of Sri Gouranga and Nityananda is amidst them in the person of the Master.

Sri Ramakrishna sings again :

"The love of Gour is sweeping over Nudera making it reel under its stress."

Slowly the singing assemblage reach Raghava's temple. They perambulate the shrine and dance for a time before the holy images of Radha and Krishna, and then advance towards the Radha-Krishna temple.

Only a part of the assemblage can find entrance into the temple, most of the crowd wait outside the gate. Sri Ramakrishna is dancing before the Divine images in ecstatic joy, often lost in Samadhi, and the devotees rain flowers and sweets over him. Mighty shouts rise in the name of the Lord—' *Haribol*, ' ' *Haribol*, ' thousands outside echo the triumphant cry and even the passengers of the boats that pass by on the Ganges catch the divine contagion and shout forth the Divine name.

The small courtyard of the temple is overcrowded. The devotees very carefully brought the Master outside to the drawing room of Mani Sen's house. The Sens are the custodians of the Radhakrishna temple and it is they that every year arrange for the Festival and invite the Master.

After a short rest the Master is taken by Mani Sen and his Guru Navadwip Goswami to an inner apartment for a light refreshment. Ram, Rakhal, M., Bhavanath and other disciples also are served afterwards.

## II

It is afternoon. The Master is sitting on a couch in Mani Sen's parlour. Navadwip Goswami is sitting near him.

Mani Sen offers to pay the Master's carriage hire. The Master says, "Why should they (Master's disciples) accept it? They earn money."

"(To Navadwip) Bhakti ripens to *Bhava* (ecstasy). Next comes *Mahabhava* and then *Prema* (love) and then the Final Realisation.

"Gouranga had this *Mahabhava* and *Prema*.

"This Love, when realised, makes one forget not only the world, but also the body which is so dear to oneself. Gouranga attained this Love, and he took the sea for the river Yamuna and jumped into it!

"An ordinary man cannot realise *Mahabhava* or *Prema*; he can utmost reach to *Bhava*.

"Gouranga had three states of consciousness,—isn't it?"

*Navadwip* : "Yes Sir : The inner state, the semi-external state and the external state."

*Sri R.* : "In the inner state, he would be immersed in Samadhi. In the semi-external state, he would only dance. In the external state, he would sing the name of the Lord."

Navadwip Goswami introduces his young son to the Master. He is a student of the Sanskrit Scriptures.

*Navadwip* : " He studies at home. 'The Vedas had almost vanished out of land. Through Maxmuller's publication we have the opportunity of studying them. "

*Sri R.* : " 'Too much study of the Scriptures is rather harmful. Know the essence of the Shastras, and you have no more need of the books. Knowing the essence, dive deep for God realisation.

" 'The Mother revealed to me that the essence of the Vedanta is that the *Brahman* is real and the world is false. She showed me that the substance of the Gita is what you come to, if you repeat the word *Gita* ten times, i. e., *tyagi tyagi* (one who has renounced). "

*Navadwip* : " Not exactly *tyagi*, but *tagi*, but it comes to the same thing. *Tagi* is derived from the root *tag* and means the same thing as *tyagi*. "

*Sri R.* : " This is the substance of the Gita : ' O man, renounce everything and practise Sadhana for the realisation of God '."

*Navadwip* : " But sir, we do not feel inclined to renounce ! "

*Sri R.* : " You are Goswamis, in charge of the daily worship of the deities. You cannot renounce the world. Who will then conduct the worship ? For you is mental renunciation.

" The Lord Himself has put you in the world to teach men. However hard you may try you cannot renounce the world. For such is the nature He has endowed you with, that you cannot avoid working in the world.

" Sri Krishna said to Arjuna, ' What do you mean by saying that you won't fight ? You cannot desist from fighting, simply because you wish it. Your nature will make you fight '."

This reference to the conversation between the Lord and Arjuna plunges the Master into Samadhi. In a while he becomes absolutely still. His eyes are wink-

less and breathing has almost ceased ! Navadwip Goswami, his son and the devotees watch him in silent wonder.

Partly regaining consciousness, the Master says to Navadwip, "Yoga and Bhoga,—spirituality and enjoyment—you Goswamis have both of them. Now pray only this to Him from the depth of your heart, 'O Lord, I do not seek the glory of Thy world-deluding Maya, I want Thee alone.'

"True He is abiding in all creatures. Who, then, is a Bhakta ?—He who abides in *Him*, he whose mind, heart, whole soul, has gone to Him.

"Some remark that this state of mine (*i. e.*, Samadhi) is a disease. But I say, 'Does one become senseless by meditating on Him Whose Intelligence is animating the universe ?'

Mani Sen is making small gifts of money to many of the invited Brahmans and Vaishnavas and offers five rupees to Sri Ramakrishna. The Master refuses to accept them, but Mani Sen still persists.

The Master impatiently asks M., "What do you say, can I accept ?" M. raises strong objection : "No, never," he says.

Mani Sen's people put the money in Rakhal's hands, asking him to buy a present of mangoes and sweets.

Sri R. (*to M.*) : "Now I am free of its responsibility. Rakhal has accepted the money, he will see to it."

Sri Ramakrishna gets into the carriage and starts for Dakshineswar. On the way, he has to pass by Mati Seal's Temple. There is a nice pond in this temple full of big fish. The Master has often asked M. to bring him to it that he might teach him (*M.*) how to meditate on the formless aspect of God.

The Master is suffering from severe cold, yet on reaching the temple, he gets down with the devotees and

going to the shrine, bows before the image of Sri Gouranga. He then goes to the eastern part of the temple where the pond lies. Innumerable fish are playing fearlessly, joyfully, in its water, for none do any harm to them, and visitors scatter grains of puffed rice on the water and they come up to the surface in large shoals to eat them.

Sri Ramakrishna says to M., "Just see the fish ! Move about like them in joy in the Ocean of Knowledge and Bliss."

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## SUMMER YOGA CLASS AT THE SHANTI ASHRAMA, CALIFORNIA

**N**'ESTLED among the beautiful hills of sunny California, adorned with the wealth of myriads of wild flowers, there is a quiet holy spot where Nature has implanted a bit of her soul in each tree, rock and flower. Even the zephyrs that blow there whisper in soft cadence the eternal Om, and birds sing as if to burst their feathered throats in the joy of this hushed spot.

Is it any wonder then that those favoured mortals, who have been privileged to visit and dwell for a time in this garden of Mother, cannot find words to describe all that they find welling in their heart for expression ?

In June 1925, Swami Prakashananda called a large class of students to this beautiful retreat for a month of study, aspiration and enlightenment. How blessed was this group ! Mother spoke through all Her aspects in the heart of each one there.

Now She chided or dragged from its dark retreat some forgotten vice and cast it before our eyes so that we might "see ourselves as others see us." Then She gave us love and sympathy, or forced pride, jealousy or rebellion out of some forgotten corner to smother it the next moment with courage and loyalty. The most subtle sin She dragged mercilessly before our eyes that we might in shame discard our pride and egotism, and humbly and charitably grow in love and reverence ; but always the Christ-Child dwelt there, the living embodiment and example of selfless love and compassion that in its purity can one moment kill that which enslaves and the next inspire the noblest patience and courage, both with equal loving kindness.

There is no sword so sharp as the sword of love to cut the festering sin from an enslaved character and no balm so soothing as a glimpse of that divine love-light even as it cuts from your heart forever some secretly cherished sin. Agony becomes as joy and joy as agony and all is swallowed in aspiration to reach the highest purity.

The Ashrama is ideally located for a Peace Retreat, set as it is in the hills. It is surrounded with them like an enor-

mous basin. Off the highways, distant from the trains, it is completely away from all the distractions and turmoil and noise of the world. The holy peace of the Ashrama sinks in deep, and in a few days the mind becomes calm and ceases to feel hurried and rushed. Thus it can more clearly reflect the spirit within and meditations in such peace and tranquility bring Divine Mother very close.

In the centre of the Ashrama grounds is what is called "the meditation cabin," in which is an inspiring picture of Sri Ramakrishna, also one of the Holy Mother, and many smaller pictures of the Swamis. And although all the Ashrama is blessed and filled with high spiritual forces, yet this cabin seems to be an especial focus for them. It was indeed an inspiration to enter this Sanctuary and meditate. . . . .

The month was a busy one. Every evening at five-thirty the blowing of the horn would awaken the whole Ashrama to prepare the students for morning meditation. At six o'clock it was an inspiring sight to see the inmates march in procession with the chanting of "*Hari Om*" towards the meditation platform arranged under the shady spreading oak, and then to sit in squatting yoga-posture to perform the morning meditation.

After half hour silent contemplation, the Swami read to us from the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna as yet not translated into English.

By listening to these wonderful conversations and teachings of Bhagawan Sri Ramakrishna recorded by "M.," in these rare books, we at times, would be transported into the banks of the Ganges and stand in the living presence of the Master, as it were.

At noon we again congregated for meditation in the same manner and the Swami read to us the instructions of Kapila to his mother Devahuti, from the Shrimat Bhagavatam. Until we heard the Swami, we had never known that this ancient book contained such rare gems of spiritual wisdom leading us almost to the threshold of divine illumination.

Again when the surrounding hills of the coast ranges reflected the glow of the setting sun and the gradual approach of the evening dusk would transform nature into the misty grey, we would sit in rapt meditation and the Swami would slowly awaken us from its charms by his mellifluous Sanskrit chants which, we love to hear again and again.

The two meals cooked and supervised by the ladies were served in the big dining room at eight-thirty a. m. and four-thirty p. m. The Swami called these meals "offerings" and each of us had to learn the Sanskrit chant for offering, "Brahmarpanam" etc. and repeated in unison before each meal. At the end of each meal, the Swami would give us choicest utterances of our Revered Swami Vivekananda from different volumes of his complete works.

The culmination of the month, the "high light," was Dhuni Night. We all looked forward to it and tried as earnestly as possible to prepare ourselves for it; tried to learn what seeds of egoism, pettiness, jealousy, etc., were still in us, taking root and growing. And truly it did seem like a rooting-out, a cleansing and a purification when we cast these seeds into the flames on Dhuni Night. It was in very truth the beginning of a new life.

The Dhuni Fire was lighted on one of the Ashrama hills, a hill rendered especially sacred because of the many Dhuni Fires and services held there. All through the night until dawn there was chanting, singing, meditation, reading, the ceremony of the burning of our faults, etc. And at dawn as we watched for the rising of the sun, suddenly the crescent of the new moon appeared from behind the hills, sharp and thin like a scimitar—it seemed another symbol of the cutting of the knots of our hearts; a symbol of the beginning of a purer, ever more purposeful life.

During the month, besides the regular meditation and classes, each student was asked to observe a day of silence with the repetition of the Divine name.

Last Sunday in June the neighbours were invited and treated to a sumptuous feast of Indian rice and delicious curry and other delicacies cooked by the Swami himself.

The students as well as the children of neighbours gave recitations, sang songs, and then all enjoyed immensely such social gathering to which they look forward with great joy and interest.

No one can comprehend what a boon this Ashrama has been to us, living in the midst of constant rush, frenzied activities of city life. It is no wonder that our hearts rise in reverential gratitude to Sri Ramakrishna and his greatest apostle Swami Vivekananda and other blessed Swamis who made the existence of such an Ashrama possible for us in this Western world.

We feel a deep debt of obligation to India and especially to the Ramakrishna Mission for sending to us such worthy souls to help us and guide us in our paths towards the attainment of divine wisdom.

The month at the Shanti Ashrama was surely of tremendous import in the life of each one of us. No one could be there and fail to feel, in some degree, the subtle forces of the place. It was as if we were in the very arms of the Divine Mother and could feel the throb and beat of Her heart. It did affect all of us, differently, perhaps, yet such forces must inevitably leave a permanent impress on our lives and characters. To be sure such forces might stir up all the sediment which, all unrecognized possibly, was down at the bottom of our hearts, but could anything be more vitally important to us? In the wonderful peace and quiet of the Ashrama there would be time and opportunity to throw out the sediment as it rose to the surface of our mind, and we could return to our tasks and duties in the world with purer hearts and a clearer knowledge of ourselves—with hearts strengthened and refreshed through our closer communion with Divine Mother.

WESTERN DISCIPLES AT THE FEET OF BHAGAWAN  
SRI RAMAKRISHNA

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## PESSIMISM AND LIFE'S IDEAL : THE HINDU OUTLOOK AND A CHALLENGE

(*With a criticism of Life and an interpretation of History*)

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(Continued from page 183)

*Asceticism is not—it cannot be—anti-social.* What is the VERDICT OF HISTORY ? Who have been the greatest benefactors of the world ? Whose hearts have more freely bled at the spectacle of human misery ? Who, I ask, have built up the great ETHICS OF PITY ? Has Lord Buddha with his *Bhikshus* clean vanished from our recollection ? Who were the soul of the great universities of Nalanda and Taxilla, of thousands of orphanages, rest-houses and hospitals for animals and men ? Shall we forget the Catholic monks of Medieval Europe because of the brag and bounce of the Protestants of the present day ? Not so did Carlyle. His Past and Present proves what I say. All the philanthropic activities of the Middle Ages—religious, educational and sanitary no less than the work of poor-relief—were theirs and theirs alone. But for them what would have become of the vaunted civilisation of the west ? Where would have been the continuity of European History from the Hellenic times to the present day ? When the barbarian hordes of Europe—Goths, Visi-Goths and Vandals—carried fire and sword before them and laid everything low and the Roman Empire with all her traditions shrieked and tottered to its fall, then who were the people who hugged to their heart and rescued from universal wreck the works of Aristotle and Plato, Homer and Virgil ? It is true that much corruption subsequently crept into the life of the Church and the lives of the monks, but that is not the fault of the ideal. *Corruptio optimi pessima.* Perhaps never in the history of man irreligion and hypocrisy have run so rampant in any department of life as in that of religion but is that any reason why religion itself should be abolished ? Reform by all means when reformation is necessary but *reformation is not deformation.* The true reformation of the Church might have been that of Savonarola, but Savonarola failed and was burnt at the

stake. Luther's success was due more to political reasons but he was a much lesser man than Savonarola. The cardinal mistake of Luther was the abolition of monasticism itself and the result is the frank materialism of Modern Europe. Let us return now to India. After skipping several centuries since the rise of Buddhism we stand face to face with that *avatar* of *Bhakti*, Lord Chaitanya of Bengal, who renounced all for the sake of his Krishna and whose message was that of kindness to all—love for all. Coming then to our own times, we see before us the dominating personality of SWAMI VIVEKANANDA who with a single stamp of his foot has left his impress upon history, whose thought is moulding the mind of India to-day—Vivekananda the hero, Vivekananda the prophet, Vivekananda the saint, Vivekananda the patriot, Vivekananda the world-teacher, the 'mighty-mouthed' expounder of Universal Religion, the "cyclonic monk," the "paragon of vedantic missionaries," the "Napoleon of Religion," the very genius of Hinduism incarnate. We feel his force and are struck with it, but very few of us have the insight to see the sorrow he felt for man and his abounding love for all. It is his sorrow that became his force for TRUE FORCE IS NOTHING BUT SORROW TURNED DYNAMIC. He was not one of your mealy-mouthed optimists or deluded meliorists. He boldly delivered the message of *Mukti* from the bondage of *Maya* and his voice was like the roaring of the lion, "like the sound of the sea." The generalissimo of Ramakrishna, his God-intoxicated Master, it was Vivekananda the Sannyasin who founded the Ramakrishna Mission and brought into being a new order of monks who are not only interpreting his message in the East and in the West as preachers on platforms and creating a literature which to many is the consolation of life and consolation of death but are also the pioneers of all true constructive work in the country, who form the vanguard of relief-forces in times of dire calamity and who sacrifice their lives without a word of demur before the mad rush of flood, terrible epidemics and grim famines like the true soldiers of a great commander. "Theirs is not to question why, theirs it is to do and die." Silent workers all—no fuss, self-advertisement or newspaper-puffing. *Daridra Narayan* (the poor who are our God) is a term we have learnt from Vivekananda, the true spirit of *seva* (service) he it is who has brought home to us—service through renunciation—and he it is who has taught us again to see the Self everywhere in Brahmin and Pariah, in Hindu, Moslem and Christian alike.

It is he who tackled before all the problem of 'untouchability' and by democratising religion and without antagonising the Hindus gave Social Reform a new meaning and a new direction. No foppish business this, and Vivekananda was a *sannyasin*. His monks have started schools for the depressed, opened hospitals for the sick and introduced industrial education in villages to make the poor self-supporting. They could have done more if they had not been thwarted by the materialistic enemies of SANNYASA AS AN INSTITUTION. In the face of all this, can we have the effrontery to say that *sannyasa* is anti-social? Because there are hundreds of vagabonds masquerading as *sannyasins* and imposing on the credulity of honest citizens, therefore it does not follow that *sannyasa* should be condemned. Cheats are cheats and should be treated as such—house-holder cheats with all their respectability and the so-called *sadhus* preying upon the community. Even now there is a *sannyasin* who is giving a good shaking to India and whose movements are watched with bated breath in all parts of the globe. A *grihi* he once was but no longer can he be called a *grihi* though his grown-up sons and wife live about him, for sex-life he has subdued and a loin-cloth is his only wear. To the Rajarshi type he does not certainly belong, if a Rajarshi is what he is made out to be. MAHATMA GANDHI is the *sannyasin* whom I here mean. The Mahatma is a Hindu, he is proud that he is a Hindu and yet tolerant to all. He does not belong to any reforming sect and yet he is a great reformer. *The only difference between the Mahatma and a Hindu in the full sense of the term* is that the *Kshatriya's dharma* based on justice and chivalry which occupies an important place in the Hindu's scheme of life has no place in the Mahatma's scheme at all. Here he is a Tolstoyist—an uncompromising Tolstoyist. It is also rightly said by his critics that he is not discriminate in the choice of his followers and is not particular about their fitness for the life of his ideal or in other words, he does not recognise the principle of *adhikara-bheda* and presses into his service all who are keen only on political *swaraj*, who are indifferent to that which is of supreme value to him and swear by non-violence only from policy. He wants to subordinate politics to religion. His followers want to subordinate religion to politics. Nor can I blame his followers for their frailties, as political *swaraj* at a very early date he put in the fore-front of his programme. No wonder that so many flocked to him and talked of non-violence till non-violence be-

came a cant. A true Hindu knows that everyone cannot be non-violent any more than everyone can be a *sannyasin*—even for the sake of swaraj. Had the Mahatma been nothing but a religious preacher and had he not behind him the record of his South African struggles, I doubt very much whether he would have had a hundredth part of the following he commanded in 1920. The split in his camp is due to his lack of insight with all the honesty of his purpose. The DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GANDHI AND VIVEKANANDA lies in the fact that Vivekananda's insight was much keener and common-sense much stronger. Vivekananda became a *sannyasin* without being a *grihi* at all—and non-resistance under all circumstances is the *sannyasin's* ideal—but very well did he know that everyone cannot be a *sannyasin* and therefore the *Kshatriya's dharma* he never rejected as he never sought to abolish the life of the house-holder. As the house-holder is permitted to beget and own property, so he is permitted to resist when resistance is necessary. This may be a concession to human weakness, but the concession *has* to be made. *This is common sense.* Only the house-holder must never forget the ideal of *sannyasa* and try to approximate to it as far as possible, or in other words, lust, greed and violence he must keep under proper control. This is *dharma* and *dharma* is nothing but a stepping-stone to *Moksha*. The path to *Moksha* is never through *adharma* but through *dharma* alone and when *Moksha* is reached all moral struggle ceases. Man is then the super-man but not in the Nietzschean sense of the term. He is the super-man because he is above the world of relativity—out of the vicious circle. He may do work for the good of others but *Karma* is no bondage to him. Such a man's work can never be an evil. Swami Vivekananda knew all this. The true spirit of *Varnasrama Dharma* he fully recognised. Mahatma Gandhi is an idealist, but a practical idealist he is not, in spite of his claim. Practical idealist is a term that may be rightly applied to Swami Vivekananda alone in this age of confusion of ideas. To the misfortune of the country, the great Swami passed away at a very early age. He had just time to deliver his message and lay the foundation of his uplifting work. The man has not yet arrived to apply all his ideas to life. If Mahatma Gandhi prepares the ground for the descent of that Saviour, he is welcome by all means. The first requisite for the nation is a severe conception of life, the spirit of stern self-restraint. *No nation-building without man-making*—that is clear; and the Swami's emphasis was

on man-making which is another name for his "*root-and-branch reform*". But whether man-making will be developed through the excitement of political agitation in its present form, through the mischievous activities of blatant demagogues, is a matter about which I have very grave doubts. Mahatma Gandhi also sees this now, he sees that there is a considerable waste of the nation's energy and human materials, he sees that the nation is going hopelessly astray—and this is the secret of his present emphasis on constructive work—an emphasis that came from Swami Vivekananda a quarter of a century ago and the Swami never perpetrated a "Himalayan blunder". I would rather not compare the realisations, powers and personalities of the two men.

It is abundantly clear from what has been said above that *Sannyasa* is not anti-social, but if anybody expects a *Sannyasin* to be a boon companion and that sort of thing, he must be sorely disappointed. One reason for the prevailing impression of *Sannyasa* being anti-social appears to me to be the existence of a certain class of *Sannyasins* who live in solitude and practise their *sadhana* in places far from the busy haunts of men. To their own *Mukti* they *can* attain and *do* attain in fact, but the power to save others and do good to humanity they do not possess. Such *Sannyasins* are called "pratyek Buddhas" in Buddhist literature. In the words of Bhagwan Sri Ramakrishna, "they are like small chips of wood that can float across to the other shore of the sea, but those who after realising themselves in solitude come back to the world to save other souls and do good to man are like the huge logs that can not only float across themselves but carry on their surface others as well." But that does not justify us in saying that those solitary souls are anti-social—souls that have cut off all connection with the world, who are civilly dead and beyond our ideas of good and evil. Their life may appear to us to be a life of inaction but their spirit of detachment is not wholly without a moral, for "the world is too much with us." Nor does it appear reasonable to class them with do-nothings, because the nature of their work is beyond our ken. Of the subtle power of the spirit very little indeed do we know. Then, as for the mere utilitarian's good of the world about which our talk is so loud, all that can be said is that it is what Carlyle regards as "philanthropy without sense." Do we ever stop to think as to who can do the greater good—men immersed in the world or men who have renounced

all and dedicated themselves to the cause of humanity ? It is a truth the man who runs may see. But how can *we* see at all—*we* who have learnt from Modern Europe, the Protestant Europe, the Mammon-worshipping, industrial, mechanical, imperialistic and chauvinistic Europe that *sannyasa* is anti-social ? Modernism indeed ! The time has come for us to shake off our contemptible slave-mentality, the soul-killing hypnotism induced by the West and to boldly assert ourselves as men.

I do not know when Europe will be able to harmonise the claims of activism and quietism. For the true relation between *karma* and *naishkarmya* the *Bhagavat-Gita* is our only guide.

I have dwelt at such length on asceticism or *sannyasa*, because the culmination of pessimism is ascetic morality or absolute renunciation and what is ordinarily called morality, or, in other words, domestic, social, political and economic morality, without which civilisation is a mockery, has no meaning without reference to the higher morality of *Sannyasa*. What is ordinarily called morality, consistently followed, leads ultimately to this. *Dharma* is nothing but a stepping-stone to *Moksha*. All the super-theistic, theistic and anti-theistic systems of India, with all their differences, are unanimous in their support of two things, namely Pessimism and Asceticism. The hedonism or *pushti-marga* of Charvaka need not be taken seriously at all. It has no influence on the religious thought of India. Leaving then Charvakism out of account when we come to the chief anti-theistic systems of Sankhya, Bauddha and Jaina, we see that, though anti-theistic, they are idealistic beyond a doubt. *The concept of God is not the common factor of our religions and schools of philosophy. The common factor is Pessimism and Asceticism. This is the sadhana of India, this is the ground-note of our culture, this the spirit of our civilisation.* The Absolute or *Ekameवाद्वितीयम्* (One without a second) of the super-theistic vedanta, the pluralism or *purusha bahava* of the God-less Sankhya, the Nyaya and Vaisesika systems with their God as the merely efficient cause (*nimitta karana*), the *an-atmanism* and Heracleitan flux (*sunyavada* and *kshanika-vijnanavada*) of Hina-yanist Buddhism, and the frank atheism of the Jaina are all agreed on THREE ESSENTIALS and they are these : (1) life is full of misery ; (2) desire is the cause of our sufferings and (3) the eradication of desire (*trishna*) is the end of our life, variously called Moksha, Nirvana, Kaivalya

and Apavarga. If there is any UNDISPUTED TRUTH IN OUR COUNTRY, it is this. That is why it has been said :—

*Veda vibhinna, Smritayo vibhinna*

*Nasou muniryasya matam na bhinnam.*

*Dharmasya tattwam nihitam guhayam*

*Mahajano yena gato sa pantha.*

(Vedas differ, Smritis differ, Rishis differ, the metaphysic of ethics is hidden beyond our gaze. The path trodden by the great souls is the only path for us).

The most noteworthy point in the above *sloka* is the use of the singular number in the word PANTHA (path) which can have one meaning only, viz., that all differences of opinion about the metaphysic of ethics (*dharmasya tattwam*) notwithstanding, there is no difference whatever as to the ethical ideal or the meaning of life, for all great souls have trodden but one path and that path is no other than the path of *tyaga* (RENUNCIATION). The different paths of Bhagawan Ramakrishna or the Bhagavad-Geeta or the different paths mentioned in the famous *mahimna stotra* known to every Hindu cannot and do not mean that there can be any path other than that of renunciation. What they all mean is that there are different methods of realisation (*sadhana-marga*), such as Jnana, Bhakti, Karma and Yoga and there is devotion to different kinds of ISHITAM. The *Ishtam* may mean any form or conception of God, *avatar* (like Buddha, Christ, etc.), saint, the Sovereign Self which is all in all or *Nirvana* which is both negative and positive. *This is our conception of Universal Religion*. We, Vedantists, claim that all paths ultimately lead to *One Reality which alone is*, and systems and faiths other than ours are imperfect but contain elements of truth and therefore need not be wholly rejected. The most important elements of truth in other systems are, according to us, Pessimism and Asceticism. Any religion or any philosophy, including the *vaunted and dogmatic mono-theism*, which does not contain these two elements or denies them, is totally false and is to be wholly rejected. Our chief quarrel is with the *anti-pessimistic and anti-ascetic mono-theism which is the fashionable creed to-day all over the world in some form or other and which is a manifest fraud*. We can tolerate the denial of God but what we can never tolerate is the denial of that which gives a meaning and purpose to our life. MORALITY CAN EXIST AND DOES EXIST WITHOUT THE CONCEPT OF GOD. That is why Swami Vivekananda once

said in my presence : “ *An honest atheist is a thousand times better than a hypocritical theist.* ” Why take the name of God in vain ? If you really loved God, you would renounce everything for His sake or at least confess your weakness and not seek to justify yourself. “ It is not by saying Lord ! Lord ! but by doing the will of the Father in Heaven ” that the kingdom of God becomes accessible to you. As for the man who does not do His will, the gate of that kingdom will be slammed in his face. If you believe in God's omniscience, you ought to know that all the praying rogues and canting humbugs are known to Him but too well. I know many theists in India who talk of the *maddhya patha* (the middle path) of Lord Buddha to justify themselves but the *maddhya patha* of Lord Buddha is not the Golden Mean of Aristotle. It implies the absolute chastity and absolute poverty of Lord Buddha's life after the Great Renunciation. Only it deprecates the cruel torturing of the flesh.

The BHAKTI-CULT of India based on the Qualified Non-Dualistic and Dualistic systems of philosophy with Personal God as the ultimate reality appeals to the Christian Orientalists of the West, because anthropomorphism is the basis of Christian Theology. Their optimistic or melioristic bias also inclines them in favour of the *leelarasa* of the Vaishnava, though their interpretation of *leela-rasa* is false and unacceptable. But it is not only they but also certain *vaishnavas* of our country including the so-called NEO-VAISHNAVAS OF BENGAL most of whom are England-returned barristers and journalists who interpret *leela-rasa* in this way for reasons I need not explain. These Neo-Vaishnavas say in season and out of season that they are not *tyaga-margis* but *rag-margis*, or in other words, the *leela* of God, which is MANIFESTED in the sense-world and therefore not *Maya* which veils and conceals, is something to be fully enjoyed and that is how God is to be realised. The disreputable low-class *nadas* and *nadis* of Bengal and their brethren in other parts of India also understand *leela-rasa* in this sense and their dissolute life is a reproach to the country and a disgrace to the nation. But is this the *Vaishnavism* of Chaitanya-Deva, the *avatar* of *bhakti* and *prema* (devotion and love) ? Does not Vaishnava mean *vairagi* or one who has renounced the world ? What can possibly be the inner meaning of Chaitanya's *sannyasa* ? Why did he indignantly repudiate his disciple Haridas the younger ? *There can be no prema (love) without tyaga (sacrifice)*. How can a selfish

man love anyone but himself ? As long as there is the least desire for worldly enjoyment, so long *Krishna-prema* is impossible. Says Bhagawan Ramakrishna : " It is not by saying ' love, ' ' love ' that love comes to you. *Krishna-prema* made Sri Chaitanya see Vrindaban in every forest and the Yamuna in all streams. " The conclusion is thus inevitable that *even our Bhakti-cult is pessimistic, for this also leads to Sannyasa*. The only difference is that there is *too much softness and lachrymosity in this cult of Bhakti* and it would not be too much to say that the less this cult is spread the better for the country. What *India wants now is not softness but hardness—aye, the hardness of steel*. What is wanted now is a little less stress on the flute of Sri Krishna and a little more stress on his *Sankha* (conch) and *Chakra* (wheel) ; a little less stress on the Sri Krishna of Braja-leela, the Sri Krishna of the Pastoral,

" Whose artful strains have oft delayed

The huddling brook to hear his madrigal, "

but the Sri Krishna of Kurukshetra, the inspirer of Arjuna and the Pandava host. The time has come, it seems, for the nation to hear once more the clarion-call of the Gita, the trumpet of Mahadeva and the roaring of the lion of the Vedanta. That feeling, rightly understood, is good for us I have already said, but of feeling we must remember there is a multitude of varieties. Different feelings must be cultivated according to time, place and circumstance, but the goal we must steadily keep in view. The goal is Mukti.

My thesis amounts to this : that Pessimism is the only true view of life and all the arguments that can be advanced in support of this view I have frankly placed before my readers. Actual experience (*pratyaksha*), Inference (*anumana*) and the wisdom of sages (*apta-vakya*) are the chief methods of proof to which I have throughout appealed. These are the three chief pillars on which Hindu methodology rests. I have shown that moral life is impossible without a pessimistic view of life. Are we going to be ashamed because Modern Europe sneers at the philosophy of Pessimism ? It is something of which we should be legitimately proud. It is a clear proof of the moral earnestness (*śrīrma-nishtha*) of the Hindu race. The keenness of our intellect, our metaphysical subtlety and gentle quietism Europe readily concedes but what the Europeans do not so readily acknowledge is the active moral life of India. They think that that is a quality which is the monopoly of the Christians and the Jews. That is why Heb-

raism is the name they have applied to the quality. Hebraism and Hellenism are terms that have been much popularised by Mathew Arnold, the apostle of "Sweetness and Light," the "levite in charge of the ark of culture." European civilisation is the product of their admixture. Both these elements are conspicuous in the civilisation of India. We have no need to go to Europe for the acquisition of these, and so far as Hebraism is concerned, we may very well claim to be the teachers of Europe. Our Hebraism is far superior to the Hebraism of the Jews, for it does not depend on a "living and jealous God" dwelling in Heaven or the craven fear of an eternal Hell. It depends entirely on the manhood of man. It is not national like the Hebraism of the Jew. It has a higher claim to universality than Christianity itself, for the motive power of Christian morality is not Duty for Duty's sake but Duty for the sake of Heaven and Duty from fear of Hell. It is "slave morality" as opposed to the "master morality" of the Hindu and this "master morality" is not the Satanic ideal of Nietzsche. If Nietzsche after graduating in the school of Schopenhauer had prosecuted his post-graduate studies in the atmosphere of India, his philosophy would have been a different thing altogether and the "transvaluation of his values" would have been a different kind of transvaluation. He would have found his super-man but in another sense. Wherever men will be honest seekers after Truth, they will have to accept Hindu Ethics willy-nilly—, it matters very little whether they like to be called Hindus or not.

*(To be continued)*

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## EVOLUTION AND PERFECTION

SWAMI PRABHAVANANDA

**I**NDEED, the recent Tennessee Law has been a blessing in disguise for it has evoked a genuine interest in the public mind to review its ideas about science and religion.

"Does science contradict religion?" "And, if so, is religion a mere myth?" These are the doubts which occupy the human mind of to-day.

One notices with great interest that there are broad-minded preachers of the Christian faith who are courageous enough to publicly admit the scientific fact of evolution and to assert that Christianity has nothing to fear from past or new discoveries of scientific truths. Exactly. But true Christianity and true religion may be contradicted by false speculations of the scientists, and, also, science may be hampered in its growth by the fanatical ideas of false religionists. And that is precisely what we have to be careful about, for there are superstitions in religion as well as in science.

In my last article on the subject, I tried to show that to deny evolution is to deny Christ, and to reject Christ and the Christ ideal is to make science and evolution unscientific.

The modern evolutionists do not believe in Christhood or Perfection, though they do not give us any scientific reason for rejecting the idea. But the supreme goal propounded by the religions of the world, not excluding Christianity itself, is freedom and perfection. That is the fundamental truth and principle of every religion. "Be ye perfect even as the Father in Heaven is perfect." "Know the Truth and the Truth shall make you free." The scientific fact of evolution is not contradictory to this fundamental principle of the religions, but the metaphysical speculations of the scientists do contradict it, because they do not believe in reaching the goal which all religions affirm. And I have no choice but to call this position a *superstitious faith* of the scientists.

I was amused, the other day, to find this superstition even in such a great mind as that of George Bernard Shaw. He says that if there is any such thing as perfection to be attained, all the 'hopes and joys of life' and all the impetus to evolve are taken away. Splendid! They all prefer to "dream in

air," as the Sanskrit logicians put it. But how can there be 'hopes and joys' of life if there is no hope of the hopes to be realized? Is it our lot to "dream in the air" all the time and to call this hoping progress? The child mind wants to get surprises. It always hopes and does not know what is coming, and there is its joy. But as we grow in years and in experience, we do not like to hope and work for any indefinite end or purpose. We want a definite goal and ideal and then alone are there the hopes and joy of success.

To be clearer and more precise on the point. The evolutionists of the West believe that man's destiny is to go on always improving, always struggling towards, but never reaching the goal. *Infinite progress!* That is the watchword of these evolutionists. It sounds very nice, but is absurd on the very face of it. Can you, scientists, think of motion in a straight line? Is not every motion in a circle? Why then speak of infinite progress? A straight line infinitely prolonged will end in a circle. What is the modern theory with regard to electricity? The power leaves the dynamo and completes the circle back to the dynamo. And so with our progression and evolution. We come from God and we go back to Him after completing the circle. God is *involved* in every being and through the process of evolution, God, or the innate Perfection in every being, becomes *evolved*, and then it is that the *purpose* of life and evolution is fulfilled. If you scientists want facts for experiment and proof respecting this Hindu ideal, study the lives of Christ, Buddha, Ramakrishna and a host of others.

SWAMI PRABHAVANANDA

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## GLEANINGS

### NO VALUES EXCEPT SPIRITUAL ONES

A conversation between Professor James Scott Haldane and a *Daily Chronicle* correspondent on the practical biological aspect of the future of the toilers of human society is given in one of the recent issues of the *Hindu*. Says the correspondent :

I asked him whether, as a biologist, he could tell me if the human being would become, so to speak, less animal and more "human" in the future.

"The civilised man," he said, "is certainly evolving physiologically. He is losing many qualities, functions, and intuitive faculties he once possessed, and which uncivilised man retains to some extent, but he is getting greater advantages in other directions, and this tendency will become more marked as time goes on.

#### A POWER WE HAVE LOST

"Man does not stand still physiologically, though it may be difficult, on a close view, to see the steps of progress. Some recent experiments in so-called telepathy by Professor Gilbert Murray furnish an illustration. In his case, undoubtedly, the results set down by some to mysterious thought transference were really due to sub-conscious auditory activity; in him—unconsciously to himself—there exists still some of the power of calling up into consciousness very faint impressions which the fineness and sharpness of the senses account for. In general we have lost much of this power. It may be reawakened to some extent in all of us, and very considerably in a few.

"Take, for instance, the power most people possess of shutting out what is not relevant in noisy surroundings, if the necessity arise. I have been in a beetling mill in Belfast where the noise was so deafening that I could not hear one single word of what was even shouted. But the girls working there were able to carry on conversation in ordinary tones and to hear one another quite well.

"I think that water-divining probably supplies another instance. In certain persons the awareness of faint vibrations from the ground over which they are walking is still retained, and they have learned how to interpret it as a sign of running water below.

"The sense of direction is another instance. A civilised man in a mountain mist or fog wanders round and round in circles, and gets lost in a thick forest. A savage has no more difficulty in keeping a straight direction than a carrier pigeon in 'finding direction' when released in a strange neighbourhood, or than most cats have in finding their way home from an unknown place to which they have been conveyed in a closed hamper. Not only do they possess a sub-conscious record of all their movements, but this record is always integrated with reference to their homes, so that by calling it up into consciousness they can at any time find their way to their homes. Civilised man has learned to employ other, and in the long run more, effective methods."

"And as we cease to employ the old faculties, so we lose them, and this tendency in the future will become more and more apparent?" I suggested.

## OUR DEPENDENCE ON SCIENCE

"Yes, as we progress in civilisation, and have less and less use for the exercise of these intuitive faculties, we come to depend more and more on scientific calculation."

"You are hinting at a time in the future when even the remnant of such intuitive reckoning will be lost, and we shall be wholly dependent on calculation. Does this mean that the man of the future will physiologically have gone backward?"

"No, we should not be too concerned about such losses. It is simply that we are learning to make successful use of scientific abstractions which, though they do not represent more than a limited aspect of reality, are yet usually excellent for immediate practical purposes, and this process, of course, will be more and more marked in the future."

"Then if this loss of intuitive faculties is compensated by a gain in the acquisition of greater experience in using abstractions, do you think that in the future we shall be able to make practical use of fresh scientific knowledge in the biological field to hasten evolution, if I may so express it?"

"Biological conceptions will I think, bulk far more in the public eye than at present. To pick out one concrete example as an illustration—we shall probably breed new and useful kinds of plants and animals far more quickly than in the past, and maintain them much more easily."

"If we are to be able to control the breeding of plants and animals in this way, shall we, do you think, breed a new kind of man?"

Professor Haldane smiled and shook his head.

"No, but the application of biological and physiological knowledge to humanity will probably improve man's habits, capacities, and outlook. There is, for instance an idea abroad to-day that the ideal state is to have little to 'do' and to 'get' as much as possible. Biologically, this is all wrong. The idea is that one is getting 'satisfaction' by obtaining as much as possible with as little effort as possible. But this has really been a source of general degradation. It has misled many labour unions; for those guiding them have absorbed the belief that it is a human ideal to do as little and to get as much as possible, and with altruistic intentions they have tried to help others to realise this aim.

## BIOLOGICAL VALUE OF WORK

"Yet really and truly nobody naturally wants this for himself; we only imagine we do, and act on the mistaken conviction. Physiologically we know that people must be making effort if they are to be healthy. Biologically it is bad for us always to be thinking of our mere individual interests. We need to be up and doing something useful."

"Then you feel that the growing tendency to look at life from this biological standpoint will enable the man and woman of the future to correct some of the physio-psychological mistakes society has fallen into along with its complicated modern civilisation?"

"Yes, for this way of looking at things—it is closely related to what may be called a new psychology—shows us the error of the old conception of people as mere units existing independently of one another. The new psychology—

the psychology of the future—teaches us that they really exist as the manifestations of a spiritual reality which pervades them and is all round them. This is diametrically opposed to the mechanistic theology which was the counterpart of mechanistic science, but is of the very essence of true religion.

"An isolated individual human organism is merely a scientific abstraction; and we are already learning to realise this. The man of the future will understand it, and shape his conduct by this new conception. The biological behaviour of individual human organisms is unintelligible apart from their relations to other human organisms and the rest of their environment. But when we look beyond mere biology and psychology, which is the branch of knowledge dealing with conscious behaviour, we see that we belong in the most intimate sense to our environment, and that this environment is in reality a spiritual one."

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#### RECOGNITION OF SPIRITUAL VALUES

"In a way the modern physicist seems almost to teach us that—will he come round completely to your view, and bring public opinion with him, do you think, in the future?"

"In many ways physics is altering fundamentally, and its basic conceptions seem to be coming very near to those necessary to biology. It is hard to speak of the future, but I think it is certain that the apparent difference between inorganic and organic phenomena is going to disappear, and such a shifting attitude is bound to have an influence on our daily lives in the future. "If we were to wake up 100 years hence I think we should find that people regarded with astonishment the materialism of the present generation, and would be at a loss to imagine how sane folk could ever have held such views."

"The nineteenth and twentieth centuries have wonderfully improved machinery, but those who have laboured at the task have often never seen that there are no real values except spiritual values. This has been partially recognised in literature, art and religion. In the future I think society will recognise it far more clearly, helped thereto by the greater and deeper biological knowledge that will become available, and by the gradual approximation of the new physics, in the hands of the younger generation, to the standpoint of the new biology."

#### THE MIDDLE PATH

The *Blessing*, a Sinhalese monthly, has the following :—

"What is wrong, with the moderns, that the Path so well guarded is now scarcely trod? The Westerner complains that we of the East sit placidly, studying and admiring our beautiful map of the Path, but never budging to tread it. The impatient Westerner who attempts to hustle us, and push past, on to the Path, only succeeds in hurling himself to premature disaster. Is there not a *via media* for us, who worship Him Who was Lord of the Middle Path?"

"We feel between our reverent placidity and the Westerner's restless bustle lies the middle way we seek. The West needs more of reverence and calm: we need more enterprise and energy; and we are convinced that whichever party first succeeds in remedying its deficiencies will be the first to present Saints to our decadent world. Our sincere wish is that, concurrent, both may achieve this consummation, and—*May there be Blessing.*"

## INDO-CHINESE CIVILIZATION

The unique power of absorption and unification possessed by Hindu Civilisation is expressed in the following words by Mr. C. F. Andrews in an article on Indo-Chinese Civilisation in the *Current Thought* :—

“To the Hindu, who cherishes his ancient culture and traditions, one of the most profoundly interesting countries in the Far East to study is Combodia, the centre of the Khmer Empire, which once extended its spiritual and temporal sway from the Gulf of Siam up to the Middle Kingdom of China. In the twelfth century of the present era, when Aryan Hinduism in the north of India was receiving one defeat after another at the hands of the rising Mahomedan powers from Central Asia, a Hindu monarch, named Jayavarman VIII, was ruling over this Khmer Empire, which then stretched literally from the Bay of Bengal on one side to the Pacific Ocean on the other. It was divided into sixty self-governing republics, and, according to the Hindu spiritual genius, which always tends towards a diversity within a unity—was rather a great federation of friendly States under one Emperor than a centralised personal despotism. Jayavarman VIII was truly the Chakravarti of his times in the Far East.

“Yet, how little is known of all this in India ! How rarely is it even mentioned ! What an insignificant place is given to this Hindu expansion in any Indian History ! How few, even of educated Indians, reading these words of mine, have ever studied the facts and realised their wonderful meaning ! No country has ever treated its own past historical records so carelessly as India !

“About eight hundred years ago, this great Hindu Civilisation was one of the chief world-factors in the Far East. It was not built up, in the main, as far as history reveals, by military power, but rather by sheer intellectual genius winning its way among backward peoples and unifying them as they had never been united before.

“I had often read in books, how this one vast Hindu Civilisation in the South-East had stretched wider and wider its arms to embrace the races round it. Its direct origin and early history are somewhat obscure, but it probably reached the height of its fame and influence at the time I have mentioned, about 1100 A. D., many centuries after the first Hindus had settled in the country and made their influence felt.

“It is not quite certain from whence these Hindu Colonisers came, and how the expansion took place which covered the South of Asia. But the evidence goes to show that they first sailed along the Eastern Coast of the Bay of Bengal and colonised and civilised as they went. We have very early traces of such settlements in Burma ; then further South in Malaya ; then in Sumatra, and last of all in Java and Bali and Celebes.

“We must realise that the Hindu Civilisation was intellectually and artistically paramount in those ages in the East to an unparalleled degree.

“Of all the architectural remains in Combodia, revealing the Indo-Chinese Civilisation, the greatest undoubtedly is Angkor-Vat, the vast temple ruin in the heart of the City of Angkor, the capital of the Khmer Kingdom. The architecture is colossal : the sculpture and carving are a work of remarkable beauty. There is nothing quite like it in the world, and it may be rightly named, along with the Pyramids, as one of the wonders of the world. It stands out, along with Borobudur, as one of the two greatest monuments of the Far East.

"The whole of Combodia is still under the influence of Hindu-Buddhist traditions. Hindu ceremonies can be everywhere traced. Hindu festivals are constantly observed. Buddhism is the State Religion. But very little now remain of the treasures of all this Hindu civilisation in the soul of this wonderful people except a gentleness of manners, a dignity of bearing, and a perfect beauty of Aryan feature in men and women alike. These old majestic buildings, which Hindu architects built, and the culture that lies behind them, are all that can now be seen of one of the noblest Empires of the East. Yet still beauty lingers, even in the present state of fallen greatness.

"Yet one of the saddest parts of the story still remains to be told. The Khmers now appear to be almost a dying race. They seem to have lost their ancient spirit of unconquerable intellectual strength. They have become dull and lifeless, and have lost even the desire to live.

"It is difficult to read a passage like this without a throb of emotion. The thought of all that vanished greatness, so noble, so artistic, so spiritual, like some perfect flower of human culture,—makes it impossible to believe that all of it can have passed away, never to return in other forms. The theory of reincarnation, if it is true, must surely have its meaning for kingdoms and peoples, as well as individuals.

"But while I have read this passage from a book of travels over and over again, and pondered over its spiritual meaning, I have only become the more certain that from India itself must go out to Combodia and to Bali and to other centres where Hinduism is not really dead, but only moribund, a new reviving message. It is, to me, a matter of intense and earnest longing, that some at least of the treasures of religious wisdom and devotion stored up in India should reach this Hindu race in its day of adversity and save it from extinction,—just as a drowning man may be saved from utter death even at the last moment of exhaustion by a timely outstretched hand. With the new facilities of travel, the way is more easy to tread than it was of old when monks and sannyasins crossed on foot the high Pamirs and the snow-girt passes of the Karakoram, and faced in open boats the terrors of the typhoons, in order to carry forward from India their spiritual message to enrich mankind. If any word that I have written in this article, or in those that I have been writing from time to time in *Current Thought* should inspire any Hindu devotee to make a pilgrimage abroad to these old centres of the Hindu Faith, I shall be amply rewarded. Knowing well how deep in the heart the tradition of the ancient faith of Hinduism is stored, I do not cease to hope that dying Combodia may one day see a small band of religious enthusiasts from India who may fan once more into a flame the still flickering light of Hindu culture in this far-off land."

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## EDITORIAL NOTES

### WORSHIP OF THE TERRIBLE

**I**T is the temerity of the human heart that makes it shun the terrible aspect of the Real. All religions tell their votaries that God is all merciful, the most benign Lord of the creation, in whose saving grace we must repose our fate. All scriptures vie with each other in describing Him as *Ananda maya*, *Prema maya*, the God of Love. And it is but natural that man instinctively turns away from aught that causes suffering to him and yearn for that safe haven of bliss. In his mind he creates a double universe, one belonging to the Blessed Lord where nothing but bliss resides and the other the world of suffering and misery under the sway of some dark fiend ; and herein lies the origin of the Satan-and-God theory of the Semitic religions.

But here in India the Vedic thinkers, in plumbing the depths of life, found out the secret, and that is why while designating all lives as food of the omnipotent God, called death as a side-dish in this universal feast of His. They found out that as shadow is inevitable with light and as such may be called another aspect of it, so death and dark vicissitudes of life are but another aspect of the same blessed Reality that gives us life.

When we analyse these gloomy facts of life which we instinctively aver we find that they mean nothing else but a change in the retrograde order. Life is but an unbroken series of changes, but when the change happens for the expansion of the Self, for the enlargement of life, it is felt as pleasure or joy. But when it entails contraction and limitation of life, it is always felt as misery and suffering. This dictum is true both in the case of physical as well as mental affections. It has been physiologically determined that the sensation which is felt as painful is produced through the contraction of the nerve cells, and, when the sensation is pleasureable, there happens an elongation or expansion of the nerves. Similarly the mental affections of pain and pleasure occur exactly in the same way by the contraction and expansion of that psychological complex we call Self. If the change brings expansion of knowledge, power, life, and possessions it is felt as joyful but if it means curtailment of the values of life it is felt as misery.

The same thing can be said with equal force of the two most principal facts of life, viz., birth and death. It is now acknowledged on all hands that death is not the extinction of life. The existence of the disembodied souls has begun to come within the experiments of the empirical science. It means only a change, a reshuffling of the physical vesture, a translation of the human consciousness, a change in the outlook of life. And again from the same it can be postulated that birth is not the origin of life. "The star that rises here has its elsewhere setting." Indeed this is the whole fact of life. The seed, in changing into a tree, must pass through the process of destruction of its seed form and the best vitality of the tree turns into seed again. This cycle of change from seed to tree and from the tree back to the seed again is the whole mystery of birth and death. As there is no origin of anything in reality so there is no destruction. Looked at from this angle of right vision birth and death which are so portentous facts of life would lose half their value and seriousness, and all that cast a gleam of joy or a gloom of sorrow in relation to them would appear as nothing more than the play of light and shade of the sailing moon of the summer sky.

This is philosophy and when philosophy is translated into life it becomes religion. And Hinduism has made wonderful preparations for conveying these sound truths of Vedantic philosophy into actual life with the help of symbols and ceremonies. In the whole range of symbology that Hinduism takes recourse to, for the popularisation of the truths of Vedanta, there are two symbols which stand pre-eminent above all religious symbols of the world. One is the great Nataraja Murti, the dancing posture of the Lord Siva, and the other is the image of the Divine Mother Kali. Both are the creations of the Tantric Age of India, the first belonging to the Saiva Agama of the south and the second to the *Sakta Agama* of the north. In the dancing posture of the Great God Siva are symbolised all the three principal facts of life, viz., creation, preservation, and destruction. And the true worship of this Divine Dancer constitutes in the meditation upon His eternal dance from which proceed life, and death as well. And if man can fill his soul with this meditation then many a gloom that troubles him in life will be dispelled, and he will come to know the true meaning of the sorrows and the joys of life and it would make him the greatest hero on earth.

The image of the Divine Mother Kali imports exactly the same significance. But the Kali aspect of the Divine Being is a bit too terrible for an ordinary mind to understand. But the followers of the Sakta Tantra being trained in the lore can easily understand the grandeur and sublimity of the symbol. The nude figure of dark blue hue, adorned with skulls and corpses, holding the tokens of creation (*vara*), preservation (*abhaya*), destruction (the sword) and post-destruction (the skull) in Her four hands, standing in the posture of *pratyaleedha* dance, though fierce in appearance of destruction, yet Her soft eyes beaming with light of grace and compassion, under Her feet lying low the Great God Siva like a motionless corpse,—all these stir up in the heart of the devotee the wonderful idea of the *Sivasakti-samyoga*, the great union of Intelligence and Energy from which proceed the whole creation and life and to which again they wend. The dark blue hue is the colour of the infinity. The nudity means the uncovered, unconditionally self-conditioned nature of that Universal Energy whose dance or play is *Life*. Siva is the Absolute Intelligence and as such is perfectly motionless and inactive. Activity belongs to the domain of energy and energy is inseparable in its real being from the principle of intelligence—matter being another aspect of spirit. This energy is not an inert lifeless entity of the materialist but is instinct with intelligence, principle and purpose, as it springs from Intelligence itself. And this Intelligent Energy is the source of all life.

As all forms are only concrete expressions of the inner Reality, the substance, so these divine forms like *Nataraja* or *Mother Kali* are not mere imaginings of poets' fancy, but actual manifestations of the inner truths of life. It may sound mystic to an untrained mind but the fact is these visions are permanent realities of a *sadhaka's* experiences, and that is why they have gained a permanent place in our religion. Sri Ramakrishna used to call these *Nityarupas* of God. They are as real as the Absolute or immanent God of the philosopher's mind, if not more.

In the worship of Kali we have the wonderful worship of the Terrible. The method prescribed in the Tantras contain all those sublime elements that go to prepare the human mind to see the hand of God in everything and steel his heart against all depression and distress. It is a process of eradicating evil by its denial. As there is no such thing as absolute evil and what we call evil being nothing else but a wrong reading

of the good, evil gets eradicated simply by its denial. We have hypnotised ourselves into the belief that we are bound and suffering, so this grand universal hypnosis naturally disappears when it is denied by the opposite process of thought. Hence Vedanta tells man to deny all evil simply by seeing good or God in everything. Like the sage Pavhari Baba we must learn to accept even physical ailments as guests from the Beloved." When evil is denied from life one fails to see evil at all afterwards. Hence Hinduism teaches man to worship God in His aspect of Good and Graceful as well as in His aspect of Evil and Destruction. And Tantra has elaborated upon this terrible aspect of God, and it will be a real redemption for this misery-ridden world, if it follows this advice of Tantra.

" For Terror is thy name,  
Death is in Thy breath,  
And every shaking step  
Destroys a world for e'er.  
Thou 'Time' the All-Destroyer !  
Come, O Mother, come !

" Who dares misery love,  
And hug the form of Death,  
Dance in Destruction's dance,  
To him the Mother comes."

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## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE STUDENT'S OWN MAGAZINE is a new enterprise in journalism. It seeks to take the Indian student out of the narrow rut in which he moves, to make him self-reliant and resourceful. It contains stories, Science Jottings, Questions and answers, gems of wisdom, advice to students about study, health, etc. At the end of every item is appended a vocabulary of difficult words with their meanings in simple words to help the young student. We have no doubt that the Students' Own Magazine will be of much help to our school boys—Published by Shiv Dass, B. A., B. T., Capital Industrial Bureau, Ram Gali, Lahore Annual subscription Rs. 2/-.

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THE PREMA (A Quarterly Journal, edited by Mr. Taranath and published from the Premayatana Ashrama, Tungabhadra) with the picture of Swami Vivekananda adorning its frontispiece and his call 'Arise, awake and stop not till the goal is reached' as its motto, with a series of Premayatana Bulletins full of suggestions to unselfish workers, with the Drama 'the Purpose' with its educative and inspiring appeal, rather than artistic, with the life of Manik Prabhu, the Hindu Saint who adopted and recognised Muhamminadan forms of worship, and other articles—, is the expression of a new faith and strength that is strongly coursing into the veins of the nation, an echo of the man-making message of the great Swami Vivekananda, and is sure to be welcomed by all lovers of the country.

In 'the Impetus' the Editor has truly said that '*the life of the saints is the religion of the masses*' and has rightly laid emphasis on the necessity of holding lesser ideals, and so more intelligible ones, to the commonality and ocular demonstrations of the truth of the great religion of the Hindus, instead of teaching mere dogma and high philosophy, often wrongly interpreted by lay, inexperienced and worldly minded scholars, which though great and ennobling, fall flat on the people and make them confound Satva and Tamas and degrade. 'Any religion that teaches that this life is all bad and detestable but *fails to give a glimpse of that beyond* is bound to make its votaries dull and cheerless.' Surely, insistence on positive ideas alone can give Shraddha. We wish our contemporary all success.

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SETU BANDHAN and THE COMING OF KALKI :—These two pieces of art in the Oriental Art Series by Mr. M. S. Sarma illustrate the well-known incident of the Ramayana and the mythological conception of the Kalki Purana. The Kalki seated on a white horse representing the pure white brilliant light of knowledge is riding at lightning speed through thick clouds of darkness which move away at the approach of the coming avatar. 'Setu Bandhan' shows a rare, but interesting piece of engineering feat. The monkeys of Rama hanging themselves into a chain from a tree in India has got hold of another in Lanka by swinging, thus forming a living bridge over which all the young ones pass to Lanka. The mighty Hanuman at the other end of the chain holding the Asoka Vriksha with one hand and the chain with the other is the leader of the

mighty circus, while Rama and Lakshman and Sugriva supervise the work of the Rama's Bridge, and Sita at the foot of the Asoka tree is eagerly awaiting Rama's coming. These pictures as novel presentations of old and familiar ideas should meet with approval at the hands of all patrons of Indian art. Etching is not a sufficiently developed art in this country and Mr. Sarma deserves praise for his new enterprise in this line. Size 14 x 20. Price Rs. 1-8-0 per plate. To be had of Messrs. M. S. Sarma & Sons, Artists and Illustrators, 19, Raja Hanumantha Lala Street, Triplicane, Madras.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### SWAMI NIRMALANANDAJI IN KERALA

His Holiness Swami Nirmalanandaji Maharaj, the President, Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Bangalore, has just returned to his headquarters after four months of tour and work in Kerala. He visited all the Maths in Travancore and opened a new Ashrama at Muttam, some four miles distant from the Ashrama at Haripad. Seven more Brahmacharins were, this time, initiated in Sannyas. A new Ashrama is under construction at Ottapalam. Two plots of land, one at Trichur and the other at Ollur, in Cochin, were given by devotees for Ashramas.

### OPENING OF THE R. K. MISSION ASHRAMA, BOMBAY

The opening ceremony of the R. K. Mission Ashrama, Khar, Bombay, which was under construction since February last after the foundation stone was laid by His Holiness the Swami Shivanandaji Maharaj, the President of the Ramakrishna Mission, was performed by His Holiness Swami Sharvanandaji Maharaj on the 26th instant. There were special puja, bhajana, and distribution of prasad to the assembled devotees. Swami Sharvanandaji will continue to stay in Bombay till the end of November.

### THE MORNING STAR, PATNA

The Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Patna, has started a new weekly, "THE MORNING STAR," from the beginning of September, under the Editorship of Swami Avyaktananda. The journal is devoted to the cause of the harmonisation of religions, spirituality and Indian nationalism. Annual subscription Rs. 2-4-0.

### VIVEKANANDA SOCIETY, JAMSHEDPUR

*Annual Report for 1924* :—The Society presents a good record of activities during its fifth year, 1924. Some preaching work was done on the occasion of the visits of H. H. Swami Abhedanandaji Maharaj, Kripasharam Mahastabir, and Miss Macleod. The Society keeps a free Reading Room and a Library which, though small, has a vigorous circulation; books are issued free to students. Three Vivekananda Free Schools are conducted by the Society, all of them making remarkable progress. A new Students' Home has been started with four boys who are taught reading, writing, gardening, etc. They also assist in the household work and join in the daily prayers. Realizing that mere sentiment and enthusiasm won't turn out practical work, the society

has also opened a worker's Training Centre, where on an average fifteen workers are being trained for various kinds of service and who are showing a growing capacity for regular and sustained work. This centre is self-supporting and also feeds the students of the Home. The society has also done some philanthropic work such as attending numerous patients including typhoid cases, cremating the dead, giving occasional help to the poor and the needy, etc. A loan Fund has been created for rescuing the poor from the clutches of cruel money-lenders. The society has now established itself in its permanent quarters by the construction of the society's buildings such as the workers' and Students' Homes, the Hall and the Library. We wish the society our hearty good wishes for still greater work in the years to come.

#### RAMAKRISHNA VEDANTA SOCIETY, CALCUTTA.

##### *Second Anniversary and Annual Report for 1924—*

The second anniversary of the above society came off on Sunday the 13th September, at the Albert Institute Hall under the Presidency of Mr. C. F. Andrews. The hall was over-crowded and many distinguished men of light and leading attended the meeting. After garlanding the President, Sj. Monilal Banerjee sang the opening song specially composed for the occasion. Then Swami Abhedananda made a short Vedic Prayer in Sanskrit and translated it into English. The General Secretary Sj. Raj Kumar Chakravarty then read the Annual Report for 1924. It speaks well of the workers who were successful in organising a Library and a Free Reading Room ; regular classes for moral and religious instructions on non-denominational lines ; classes for tailoring, cane-work, spinning (charka), carpentry, and other home industries ; opening a charitable homeopathic dispensary ; publishing a number of useful books ; carrying on a vigorous propaganda against untouchability and in doing social service in a variety of ways. The reference in the report about the activities of the two branches of the society at Darjeeling and Hajigunge were particularly happy. Then a song was sung in chorus by the girls of the "Iswar Asram."

Prof. C. R. D. Naidu was the first speaker. He explained the philosophy of the Practical Vedanta through the development of the nerves and muscles of the human system. Sj. Hirendra Nath Dutt explained the true principles of Vedanta.

Sj. Bhupendra Nath Dutta, who was specially introduced by the President as the brother of Swami Vivekananda spoke at length on the activities of the Swamis of the Ramakrishna Order in America from the standpoint of national utility and pointed out that they have been able to dispel many of the prejudices that existed against India in various ways. He pleaded for foreign propaganda. He did not mean any political propaganda, but the establishment of cultural contact between the east and the west in every department of human life. He strongly deprecated the aloofness of India and asked the audience to allow the world current to come in and not build a Chinese Wall and say that they are the most spiritual people.

Ray Yatindra Nath Choudhury, M. A., B. L., and Sj. Amrita Lal Bose next spoke about the high function of Vedanta and showed how the Vedantic Religion could unify the whole world. Dr. Moreno

interpreted Vedanta as the last wisdom and pointed out how there was divinity in every man. He wondered why the Indians did not carry these noble truths abroad. Europe after the Great War was bleeding, and India alone could save her. Let India conquer the whole world by the golden rule of Ahimsa and Love. Let Indians be the torch bearers and harbingers of Liberty to the world by preaching the religion of equity by seeing the same Self in the greatest and the lowest. S. J. Sachindra Nath Mukherjee, M. A., B. L., spoke highly of Swami Vivekananda and Abhedananda's work in America by which the Westerners realised the highest spiritual heritage of India. He advised the Indians to follow the paths of their fore-fathers and to be strong in body and soul.

Mr. C. F. Andrews then delivered his short but very effective presidential address. He said in the course of his speech that any one who knows of the conditions under which the vast multitude of the Calcutta students are obliged to live to-day must be intensely thankful that in their midst the Swamiji is working as a living example of goodness and self-sacrifice and is holding up the light of religion in the midst of so much that drags down the soul of man. He next referred to the desperate need of about 20 lakhs of our fellow country-men, in Malaya, Fiji, Mauritius, and other parts of the world, and appealed to the Ramakrishna Vedanta Society and the Ramakrishna Mission to do something for them. He next made it quite clear that there is no rivalry between the Ramakrishna Vedanta Society and the Ramakrishna Mission. They are entirely working together in every sense of the word ; and because the work has branched out into two different tracks, it is all the more strong and effective. He next feelingly appealed to the students at least one of them to go out to Fiji to serve the brethren there who are not able to rescue themselves from all the miseries and evils, to put them on their feet again and to make them men and women. Lastly he thanked the office-bearers and the workers of the society and wished them every success.

S. J. Dilip Kumar Roy then entertained the vast audience with his sweet and soul-stirring music. With a vote of thanks proposed by S. J. Monindra Nath Mitter, Solicitor, and seconded by Swami Lavanananda, and a closing song specially composed for this occasion by S. J. Amritalal Bose, the meeting dispersed late at night.

#### VIVEKANANDA SOCIETY, COLOMBO

The Report of the Vivekananda society of Colombo, for the year 1924, also has a record of good works to its credit.

It celebrated the birthday anniversaries of all the sixty-five Saiva saints, of Sri La Arumuga Navalar, and of Swami Vivekananda. The society invited various distinguished men and arranged many public lectures, Katha prasangams, and scripture classes for the benefit of the public. The society keeps a fairly good Library and Reading Room. It collected and remitted a sum of Rs. 313 towards South Indian flood relief. For the solution of the problem of Buddha's Shrines in Hindu hands and of Hindu Shrines in Buddhist hands the society has suggested to various influential bodies that all these temples should be placed under the joint management of Hindus and Buddhists.

There came out the heart, from the heart the mind from the mind the moon.

There sprang forth the navel, from the navel the *apana*, from *apana* death.

There came out the generative organ, from the organ seed, from the seed water.

[NOTE:—In describing this process of creation the imagery was drawn from the process of development of the embryo in an egg or the foetus in an womb. As after impregnation the morula or the life-nucleus floats in the amniotic fluid and in the fluid itself the foetus develops, and at different stages the developments of different organs and senses take place until parturition ; so here also the Virat Purusha was first imagined to have been evolved out of water and then gradually the organs, the senses and the presiding deities of the respective senses were imagined to have been evolved. It may appear curious at first that the Sruti should have described the evolving of the senses from the sense organs and the presiding deities from the senses themselves, but the point becomes perfectly clear when we take note of the process of the evolution of the foetus itself. In its evolution first appears the organ and then gradually the power of utilising the organ which is generally called the *quickening* stage and then subsequently the expressions of the principle of consciousness through all these senses and organs. The appearance of consciousness or *Chaitanya* or *devata*, as it is figuratively described in the Vedas, completes the embryonic condition of life and brings it out to the world of expression. As in every organic being we notice the three factors, viz., the organ, the energising principle of the organ and the intelligence controlling the energy and the organ, so three things are always distinguished in the above Sruti i.e., the physical organ or the seat of the senses, the senses themselves, and the presiding deities of the senses. The presiding deities, *Abhimanidevatas*, should not be taken in the sense that they are so many spirits or angels controlling the different organs of man, but they should be understood in the Vedantic sense of the different expression of the same *Atma-chaitanya* or

intelligence, working differently through the different sensations. That is why we find the word *devatas* often used for the sages in the Upanishads.]

End of the First Chapter.

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# Aitareya Upanishad.

## CHAPTER II.

ता एता देवताः सृष्टा अस्मिन्महत्त्यर्णवे प्रापतन् । तमशनापि-  
पासान्भामन्ववार्जत । ता एनमब्रुवन्नायतनं नः प्रजानीहि यस्मिन्प्रतिष्ठिता  
अन्नमदामेति ॥ १ ॥

ताः those सृष्टाः created एताः these देवताः gods अस्मिन् in this  
महति great अर्णवे ocean प्रापतन् fell. तं them अशनापिपासान्भ्यां with  
hunger and thirst अन्ववार्जत got united. ताः they एनं to Him  
अब्रुवन् said नः to us आयतनं dwelling place प्रजानीहि ordain,  
determine (वयं we) यस्मिन् in which प्रतिष्ठिताः being established  
अन्नं food अदाम shall eat.

1. Those gods, thus created, fell into this great ocean of the world. Then He united them with hunger and thirst.

They told Him: show us a place in which being established we may eat food.

[NOTE.—The gods, being created, are naturally made subject to the limitations of life, and these limitations or conditioned states of existence are spoken of here as hunger and thirst. It is instinctive with conditioned life to desire to transcend its limitations, and in this desire lies the seed of progress or retardation of the conditioned life. Even the gods, however powerful they may be, yet, compared with the infinite grandeur of the Soul, are stricken with limitations of life.

*The great ocean of the world.*—The world is always compared in the Sanskrit literature with the ocean on account of its infinite danger and difficulty to be crossed. The Sanskrit word *samsara* means the interminable chain of life and death which constitute the life of this world.]

ताभ्यो गामानयत्ता अब्रुवन् वै नोऽयमलमिति । ताभ्योऽश्वमानयत्ता  
अब्रुवन् वै नोऽयमलमिति ॥ २ ॥

ताभ्यः to them गां cow आनयत् brought. ताः they अब्रुवन् said  
अयं this नः for us न वै is not अलम् sufficient. ताभ्यः to them

अथ horse आनयत् brought. ताः they अनुवन् said अथ this नः for us न वै is not अलम् sufficient.

3. Then He brought a cow to them but they said : it is indeed not sufficient for us.

He brought them again a horse but again they said : it is not sufficient for us.

ताभ्यः पुरुषमानयत्ता अनुवन्सुकृतं वतेति पुरुषो वाव सुकृत ता अन्नवीचथायतनं प्रविशतेति ॥ ३ ॥

ताभ्यः to them पुरुषं man आनयत् brought. ताः they अनुवन् said सुकृतं well done वत in joy. पुरुषः man. वाव verily सुकृतं well created. ताः to them अन्नवीत् said यथायतनं to proper abode प्रविशत enter.

3. Then He brought them again man, seeing whom they exclaimed in joy : well done. And therefore well-done indeed is man.

Then He told them : do ye enter into your own proper places.

[NOTE.—In the evolution of life man comes after the appearance of animals like cows and horses, and as animals are devoid of the power of discrimination and higher intelligence, gods cannot reside in them fully. It is only in man where life reaches its acme of glory gods come to reside. Excepting the human body all other bodies are called *bhogayatana*, i.e., bodies meant for sufferings or enjoyments only. Only the human body is called the *Karmayatana*, i.e., the body with which *Karmas* can be done. So Sruti figuratively tells here that gods entered only the body of man.]

अग्निर्वाग्भूत्वा मुखं प्राविशद्वायुः प्राणो भूत्वा नासिके प्राविशद-  
दित्यक्षुर्भूत्वाऽक्षिणी प्राविशद्विशः श्रोत्रं भूत्वा कर्णौ प्राविशन्नोपधिवन-  
स्पतयो लोमानि भूत्वा त्वचं प्राविशंश्चन्द्रमा मनो भूत्वा हृदयं प्रावि-  
शन्मृत्युरूपानो भूत्वा नाभिं प्राविशदपो रेतो भूत्वा शिश्नं प्राविशन् ॥ ४ ॥

अग्निः Agni वाक् भूत्वा having become speech मुखं mouth प्राविशत् entered ; वायुः Vayu प्राणः smell भूत्वा having become नासिके into the nostrils प्राविशत् entered ; आदित्यः Aditya चक्षुः भूत्वा having become the sight अक्षिणी into the two eyes प्राविशत्

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

" Let the lion of Vedanta roar."

" Let me tell you, strength, strength is what we want

And the first step in getting strength is to uphold

The Upanishads and believe that ' I am the Atman . ' "

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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## PRAYER

पितासि लोकस्य चराचरस्य ।  
त्वमस्य पूज्यश्च गुरुर्गरीयान् ।  
न त्वत्समोऽस्त्यभ्यधिकः कुतोऽन्यो ।  
लोकत्रयेऽप्यप्रतिमप्रभावः ॥  
तस्मात्प्रणम्य प्रणिधाय कायम् ।  
प्रसादये त्वामहमीशमीड्यम् ।  
पितेव पुत्रस्य सखेव सख्युः ।  
प्रियः प्रियायार्हसि देव सोऽहम् ॥

**T**HOU art the father of the world—of all that moves and all that stands. Greater than the great, Thou art the object of its worship. There is none equal to Thee. Who, then, can surpass Thee? Incomparable is Thy power in all the three worlds.

Therefore prostrate I fall before Thee, O Lord, and seek to win Thy grace. Bear with me even as a father with his son, as a friend with his friend, as a lover with his beloved.

## GOSPEL OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

[*Dakshineswar—September 1884*]

**I**T is Monday, the third day of Sri Sri Durga Puja, being the 29th September of 1884. The day has just dawned : the holy aratrikam is done in the Mother's temple : the minstrels are still playing their morning tunes in the Nahabat : the gardeners and the priests are gathering flowers for the Mother's worship.

The Master has left his bed early in the morning when it was still dark. Bhavanath, Baburam, Niranjan and M. have opened their eyes to find him dancing ecstatically all over the floor, repeating all along : "Hail Durga ! Hail Durga ! Hail !" Just a child as he is—his loins are bare !

Bhavanath and others had passed the night in the verandah of the Master's chamber.

A little while later, Sri Ramakrishna utters : "Sahajananda ! Sahajananda ! (Bliss Innate !)"

Next he thus repeats Govinda's name : "O Govinda—my soul, O my life !"

The devotees are seated on their bed and are intently observing the Master's divine moods.

During this period, Hazrah is staying in the temple, with his seat in the south-eastern corridor. Latu also is then living there in constant service of the Master. Rakhal has gone to Brindavan ; and Naren who is expected to-day, often comes to visit him.

The northern corridor where the devotees passed the night was protected by partitions, it being now winter. There Sri Ramakrishna has taken his seat on a mat, after all have done their morning wash.

Bhavanath and M. sit close by him and others are now and then attending to him.

*Sri Ramakrishna (to Bhavanath) : "The Jivakotis (i. e. ordinary individuals), you know, cannot easily have*

faith. The faith of the *Iswarakotis* (*i. e.* divinely gifted individuals) is instinctive. When Prahlad went to write the letter *ka* he at once burst into tears for the letter reminded him of Krishna. But to be sceptical is the nature of the *Jivakoti*.

"Hazra will never believe that Brahman and Sakti, and Sakti and Saktiman (*i. e.* he in whom Sakti or Energy inheres) are identical. When That is inactive, I call It Brahman ; the Same, when It creates and sustains and destroys, I call Sakti. But It is bothways the same identical Entity. From the word 'fire,' its burning power necessarily follows, and from 'the burning power,' the fire : you cannot think of the one without the other.

"I then prayed : 'Mother, Hazra is trying to controvert this doctrine ; either convince him or remove him hence.' The next day he came and confessed that he admitted the truth of this doctrine and said '*Vibhu* (the All-pervading one) is existing everywhere !'"

*A devotee* : "You were so much upset by Hazra's words !"

*Sri R.* : "My nature has undergone a change : I cannot now wrangle with people. I am not in a mood to debate and contend with Hazra. Hriday told me in Jadu Mallik's garden, 'Uncle, do you no more want to enter into discussion with me ?' 'No,' said I, 'I am no longer in that state of mind, it is not in me now to wrangle with you !'

"What do knowledge and ignorance mean ? So long as one feels God distant, it is ignorance ; and when He is perceived as near, very close to you,—it is knowledge.

"When one attains true knowledge, all objects appear to him as sentient. I used to talk to Sivu, a mite of a child of 3 or 4 years. I was then staying in those parts\*. One day it was cloudy, with thunder and lightning flashes ; Sivu says : 'Uncle, look, how they strike

\* Master's birth place.

the match !' [*All laugh*]. Another day I found him going alone to catch butterflies ; the leaves of a tree near by were quivering ; he says to them : ' Hist, Hist ! I am to catch butterflies !' To the boy everything appeared as living.

" You cannot attain to God unless you have sincere faith, the faith of the child. Oh, what moods were mine ! One day something stung me amongst the grass. I feared it might be a snake. What could I do then ? I was told that if the snake repeats its bite, it withdraws the poison. So I at once began my search for the hole so that the snake might sting me again. Thus I went on when some one asked me what I was doing and when all told, he said, ' The second bite must be on the same part as the first.' Then only I came away. Probably it was some insect bite.

" Another day I heard from Ramlal that the autumn dew is wholesome. There is something of a rhyme on it, and Ramlal had told me that ; so that when I was driving back from Calcutta, I thrust out my head from the carriage to get the full benefit of the dew. The result was I fell ill." (Ramlal is the Master's nephew.)

Now the Master comes into his room and seats himself. His legs have slightly swollen, so he asked the devotees to examine if the pressure of their fingers make any depression therein. They find there are slight depressions ; but they all console him that it is nothing.

*Sri R. (to Bhavanath) :* " You will call Mahinder of Sinti, his assurance will set my mind right. "

*Bhavanath :* " You have such great faith in medicine ! We have not. "

*Sri R. :* " Medicine is also His ! It is He, in one form the doctor. Gangaprasad told me not to drink water at night. I look upon his behest as the very Veda, for I know he is the very person of Dhanwantari\*."

\*The presiding deity of the art of medicine and healing.

Now Hazra joins the group. After some uncertain talks, the Master says to Hazra, "Look here, why did the sight of Narendra move me so much, although so many others like Bijoy and Kedar were present there at Ram's? Kedar, I have seen, belongs to the plane of *Karanananda*\*"

Yesterday, the second day of Sri Durga Puja, Sri Ramakrishna had been to Calcutta to see the image of the Mother Durga, and, on his way to Adhar's, he stopped at Ram's where many devotees had assembled and amongst them Narendra. As the Master saw him he stretched his leg over his knee and went into Samadhi. The Master is referring to this incident.

In a short while Narendra makes his appearance. The joy of the Master knows no bounds.

\*Ananda or Bliss of the *Karana sharira* or *anandamaya kosha*, the sheath or *kosha* nearest to the Atman and which is analogous to the *upadhi* of *Iswara*.

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## HINDUISM AND BUDDHISM\*

SWAMI ABHEDANANDA

**W**HEN I was requested to preside at this meeting I accepted the invitation without any hesitation for the special reason that Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Foster is my personal friend and a student. I have been her guest in her home at Honolulu, and when I was lecturing in San Francisco after establishing the Vedanta Society of San Francisco, she became one of the members and attended my classes and lectures on every occasion. . . . . Mrs. Mary Foster told me when I spoke to her about Vedanta Philosophy, that she did not know anything about it. She thought she helped Mr. Dharmapala and asked whether I knew him or not. I said, "Yes". He has been my friend for many years. I knew him in 1891 before he went to America, when Charu Babu was his Secretary and the Maha-Bodhi Society was established ; we were then living as monks in Baranagore and afterwards at Alambazaar. I also met Dharmapala in New York while he was travelling. He did not succeed in establishing a temple for Buddhism in any part of the United States ; but we were more successful. Mrs. Foster told me that she had given considerably to India through Mr. Dharmapala. So I consider this building as ours, not only as belonging to the Buddhists only, but to the Hindus as well. It is the temple of Universal Religion which Lord Buddha preached and which we are preaching to-day. Buddha's teachings and the teachings of Vedanta are not different. Lord Buddha preached the doctrine of the Upanishads—the pure Adwaita Vedanta. Buddha described Nirvana as : "There is neither coming nor going, neither standing, neither death or birth. It is without basis, without procession, without cessation—that is the end of sorrow, that is *Nirvana*." It is the same thing as the Absolute Truth which is described by Sankaracharya as Brahman. Buddha neither denied nor emphasised the existence of Atman ; still he was cognisant of the Absolute Truth which was afterwards described by the Madhyamika School of Buddhists as *Sunyam*. *Sunyata* is the same as Brahman of the Vedanta.

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ऊर्ध्वशून्यं अधः शून्यं  
मध्यशून्यं यदात्मकम् ।  
सर्वशून्यं स आत्मेति etc.

That is the negative side which was emphasised by the Madhyamika School ; but the same negative expression was contradicted by the positive expression which was

ऊर्ध्वपूर्णं अधः पूर्णं  
मध्यपूर्णं यदात्मकम् ।  
सर्वपूर्णं स आत्मेति etc.

Everything of the relative phenomena is destroyed and reduced to nothingness or noumenon. In order to get out of relativity, we must proceed towards the Absolute, transcend the limitations of time, space and causation, and enter into the abode of noumenon where we shall find the fulfilment of the saying,

पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात् पूर्णमुदचयते ।  
पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥

The whole universe is pervaded by the Infinite Being ; every atom of the universe is pervaded by that One Existence, Intelligence and Bliss. That is more solid than ether of space. Sir Oliver Lodge in his book on " Ether of Space " says that ether is more solid than steel. There is no such thing as empty space in any part of that solid substance which is known as " ether of space " ; but Brahman is more solid than ether of space ; it is solidity—*Chidghana*—itself. We cannot imagine a speck of space which is not pervaded by Brahman.

Buddha's teachings are grand and glorious because he taught the truths of the Sanatana Dharma. When the orthodox Hindus rejected Buddha and his teachings and called Buddha an atheist, they struck at the very core of the Sanatana Dharma. They did not know what harm they were doing by denying the teachings of Buddha ; but in the teachings of Sankaracharya and of other great masters we have found that the truth which was proclaimed by Buddha was the universal truth of Vedanta, the essence of the Vedas, although he was wise enough not to go into discussions regarding the existence of God which prevailed in those days. His religion was based upon the humanitarian principles. Buddha was extremely practical and he wanted to see happiness established in the hearts of all. His four *Noble Truths* were the truths which

were taught in the Upanishads—the existence of evil, the cause of evil, the cessation of evil, and how to attain to happiness. All these four noble truths were not Buddha's invention. He inherited them from the teachers who preceded him and those teachings he gave to the masses belonging to all creeds. He was broad, liberal and generous. If we accept the teachings of Buddha, we accept the teachings of the Sanatana Dharma, and this hall which was erected by the gifts of Mrs. Foster should not be considered as a thing belonging to a particular school. It belongs to India and to the Hindus among whom Buddhists are included. Buddhists are not outside of the Hindus. There are good Hindus and there are bad Hindus amongst us. We might be worse than they are, but still we are brethren. We might worship images in the form of Durga, Siva, etc.

#### BUDDHISM AND IMAGE WORSHIP

But do you know that the image-worship was introduced by Buddhists themselves? If some Buddhists condemn image worship to-day, they must know that their fore-fathers first created the statues of Buddha, Vajratara and other Devas. They introduced the worship of images first relating to Buddha and his life, just as you see here on the walls. I have seen them in stones in Taxilla near Rawalpindi, Peshawar and Calcutta museum. I have got books on them too. So Buddhism introduced many things among the Hindus. The worship of Jagannath was introduced by Buddhists. Jagannath, Balaram and Subhadra of the Hindus at Puri were the emblems of the Tri-ratna of the Buddhists at the temple of Sri Kshetra. Only two years ago, I crossed the Himalayas on foot and went to Tibet. There I saw the three figures carved out on the stones of the Himalayas in black, white and yellow. If you read Huen Tsang's travels and his life you will find that Sri Kshetra was a great Vihara of the Buddhists. So, my friends, Buddhism has introduced this worship and do you know that Shiva is nothing but Buddha in another form? The snake over the head of Buddha becomes the snake on the neck of Shiva and Vishnu as the Seshasayi is Buddha in his Pari-Nirvana lying down on his right side, with devotees worshipping him with folded hands. When I try to trace image-worship I have to go back to the Buddhistic period, and if I have to blame any one, I have to blame the Buddhists for image-worship that has crept into Hindu community and religion.

Therefore we should be broad and liberal. We should embrace Hinduism in our fold. Buddhism was at one time a very dry philosophical doctrine. It needed some emotion and works of emotion in it, and which were afterwards introduced in the religion of Chaitanya Dev. The best part of Buddhistic thought still exists in India and will be found in the religion of Vaishnavas—I mean the element of Bhakti. You know that the Sahajiya sect of Vaishnavas, especially of Chandi Das and Vidyapathi, advocating free love, were originally a sect of the Buddhists in Bengal. The 'Domas' were originally worshippers of Dharma—'Dhamma' in Pali became 'Doma,' the God of the untouchable sect of the Hindu community. The Hindus hate them as outcastes, because they did not perform the purification ceremony and become converted into Hindus. This is the beginning of 'Asprisyata' in Bengal and other parts of India. Those who were 'Asprisyata' were originally Buddhists; and because they did not accept the 'Prayaschittam' which was offered to them by the Hindu leaders, they were punished by ostracism. Buddhism has done a great deal of good and Buddhism has also introduced all these faults that we find to-day in Hinduism. At the time when Buddha lived there was no image worship. You don't find any mention of it in the Vedas. So the worship of the images of Shiva, Durga, Krishna, Rama, etc., was a later introduction. Their statues and temples were the imitation of the Buddhistic statues and temples. If you go to Rangoon you will find the Swedagon Pagoda which has four Lion Gates—Simhadwara—just like those of Jagannath temple. Before this modern temple was rebuilt by the Hindus, it looked similar to the Swedagon Pagoda temple of Buddha in Rangoon, Burma.

Mrs. Foster by donating to Mr. Dharmapala and the Maha-Bodhi Society has donated to the Hindu Religion and I shall be very glad to see that Mr. Dharmapala appoints a Committee of Trustees. The members of this Trust should come from all sects of Hindus, not merely from the Buddhists of Ceylon, and they will form the trustees of this beautiful mansion and temple which was built through the bounties of Mrs. Foster. But if he wants to make it a sectarian thing, Mrs. Foster's desires will be frustrated. She thinks she has helped India and Indians by donating such a large sum of money. She told me positively about it. When I asked her for donation she replied, "Why should you ask for further

'donations when I have already done so much for India through Mr. Dharmapala ?' That was her answer and I am very glad to express her ideas here at this meeting when we are honouring her during her eighty-first birthday anniversary. I shall write to her about this meeting. She will of course come to know through correspondence from her friends and the secretary of this Vihara. I will tell her that I had the honour and privilege of presiding over this meeting.

#### VEDANTA AND BUDDHISM

I wish to say only one word more before I conclude. I have great respect for Buddhism and the life of Buddha and his teachings. When I was waiting on Sri Ramakrishna at the Cossipore garden while he was sick in bed, Swami Vivekananda, myself and another Swami went to Buddha Gaya. We were studying 'Lalitavistar' at that time and we were admiring his Tapasya, austerities and determination which Buddha had just before he attained to Buddhahood. We used to recite

इहासने शुष्यतु मे शरीरं  
त्वगस्थिमांसं विलयं च यातु ।  
अप्राप्य बोधिं बहुकल्पदुर्लभां  
नैवासनात्कायमतत्त्वलिप्यते ॥

"I shall firmly sit on the seat under this tree and shall not move until I have attained to Buddhahood. That Bodhi which is so difficult to attain I must attain. Let the bones of my body be scattered by the winds and my flesh be destroyed and reduced to atoms ; still I shall not move until I have attained to that Bodhi."

There is another passage which I often used to recite :—

वरं मृत्युः प्राणहरो धिक्  
प्राप्त्यं नो च जीवितम् ।  
संप्रामे निधनं श्रेयः  
न च जीवेत् पराजितः ॥

When he was fighting against the temptations of Mara, the personification of Evil, he was talking to himself, " I shall fight to the finish. I shall rather die than live defeated by Mara, the Evil Doer. It is better to die on the battle-field fighting, than to live at the mercy of the enemy." What determination he had ! What courage and strength of mind Buddha showed to the world ! We must take his example and hold it before our eyes. Let us follow his path and live up to the ideal

which Buddha preached in the world. The Nirvana of Buddhism is not a state of negation ; it is the attainment of absolute peace and happiness. If Buddha emphasised the negative side of Nirvana, it was Sankaracharya who emphasised the positive side of Nirvana. Therefore we must combine both and consider that a higher ideal of Nirvana was represented not by Buddha alone nor by Sankara, but by both Buddha and Sankara. They described both sides of the same thing. Therefore we should regard them both as our Leaders, Masters and Saviours.

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## PESSIMISM AND LIFE'S IDEAL : THE HINDU OUTLOOK AND A CHALLENGE

(*With a criticism of Life and an interpretation of History*)

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(Continued from page 212)

OUR political subjection and social evils are not due to our philosophy and religion. Swami Vivekananda was never tired of repeating this truth. It is the decline of the influence of our philosophy and religion and the perversion of the truths they contain that have brought us to this sad pass. Raja Rammohan, the founder of the Brahmo Samaj, did not understand this cardinal fact though he studied all our Shastras and really meant well. True it is that he was the first to translate into Bengali the Upanishads and the *Sankara-bhashya* of the Vedanta. It is also true that he talked of *Nirguna Brahma* now and then. Yet a man of realisation he emphatically was not, for the practice of *Vairagya*, which is the secret of vision and which alone can enable a man to catch the spirit of the Shastras, is not to be found anywhere in his life. In accepting the suggestion of David Hare to introduce Western education in the country systematically and on a large scale and in approaching the Government on this behalf he did well, no doubt, for a comparative study of the two types of culture is necessary for us to appreciate the greatness of our achievements, but that is a matter for which his services need not be exaggerated in as much as Western education on a small scale had already been introduced by the Christian missionaries of Serampore and it would have been more widely spread sooner or later without the least effort of Raja Rammohan to support its claim. As long as it is England's political necessity and as long as England produces philistines like Macaulay so long Western education will not be without its champion. Western science we gladly welcome. Had India been free like Japan, the dissemination of Western science might have been wider and quicker and her contribution to science, the development of which was arrested a few centuries ago, might have been much greater still. But there is something greater than science. What, therefore, is most objectionable is the Raja's

disparagement of our philosophy and religion in the petition he addressed to Lord Amherst, the then Governor-General of India, though in justice to him it must be said that he was not a snob but had self-respect enough to stand in defence of Hinduism when it was unfairly attacked by the Christian missionaries, the kith and kin of the ruling civilians. If Hinduism had been false, he need not have defended it from patriotic motives, but it is more true than he ever imagined. He had yet to know that the highest realisation can come to a man even through the worship of images if his heart is in the right place, though image-worship is not compulsory for a Hindu. The defence of Hinduism he attempted therefore was a halting performance. He paid the Christian Missionaries back in their own coin by attacking Trinitarianism and by showing that it is not far removed from Hindu "idolatry." He composed a song that reminds us of Shakespeare's lines :

" We are such stuff  
As dreams are made of : and our little life  
Is rounded with a sleep. "

But in the very next breath he said that India had gone to the dogs through her doctrine of Maya. Maya-vada, the greatest doctrine the world has ever produced, is not at all responsible for our country's degradation and the Jesus of the pamphlet Raja Ramnohan wrote, entitled *The Precepts of Jesus : The Way to Peace and Happiness*, is not at all necessary for our country's salvation, though every true Hindu has respect for Jesus as He comes up to our ideal of a perfect *Sannyasin*. How dynamic is the doctrine of Maya, how inestimable its moral value, I have already shown in this paper. Let me but add that *Advaita-vada* (non-dualism), the great doctrine, "Thou art That," the counterpart and positive aspect of the negative doctrine of Maya, is not Pantheism as many people erroneously believe. "A-cosmic Pantheism" it may be called though the term is awkward and reminiscent of a "circular square." That moral life cannot stand on Pantheism is quite clear from the glaring inconsistency between the Ethics and Metaphysics of the system of Spinoza. Because Nature is unmoral, therefore Pantheism is false. The All of *Sarvam khalwidam Brahma* is not the All of Pantheism but the All of Advaita. Nor should *Advaita-vada* be mistaken for the Monism of Europe with its anti-ascetic morality—the monism with its fancied harmony between the Unseen

and the Seen, the monism with its apotheosis of the Concrete Universal. The Pragmatism and the Pluralism of James are a thousand times better and more vital than this sort of Monism. Bradley writes his *Appearance and Reality*. From the first part of the book it appears that he is approaching our *Maya-vada*. But what do we find in the latter part of the book and in his later work as a whole ? The answer we find in the following words of Muirhead : " Though all these things are not the realities they sometimes appear, yet they are the appearances of reality and if we do not find it in them we shall not find it anywhere at all. It is this voice that speaks in the latter part of the book (*Appearance and Reality*) and in his (Bradley's) later work as a whole (*Mind*, April, 1925, pp. 183-184). "

Raja Rammohan never truly understood *Advaita-vada* nor could he enter into the spirit of the other schools of Hinduism through the want of *Vairagya* in his life. The Hebrew Bible and the Greek Bible Raja Rammohan may have read, but he could not enter into the spirit of Christianity either, for to understand Christianity a man must understand the spirit of renunciation above all. The Raja passed through the phase of French Illumination and Deism and at last accepted Unitarianism as final. The Mono-theism of Islam also appealed to him. Unitarianism, Arianism or Socinianism which was once the religion of the Vandal barbarians is not the last word of Christianity. It does not appear that the Raja was ever acquainted with the religious experience of a Christian saint like St. Francis of Assisi. That is why with all his reading of the Vedas and Vedānta he found his final resting place in Unitarianism - cum - Mono-theism - cum-Protestantism - cum -Eclecticism and it is on that foundation that he presumed to build the fabric of Universal Religion. The Raja was a Mono-theist and his mono-theistic interpretation of Hinduism is unacceptable. Hinduism never is and never was co-extensive with Mono-theism. It means much more than Mono-theism and at the same time has a place in the niches of her temple for the Personal and Anthropomorphic God of Mono-theism and all the gods, avatars, prophets and saints worshipped by the Hindus. The Hindus believe in One in Many (Immanent), in One above Many (Transcendent), in One in Many and above Many both (Pan-entheism) and One only (*advaitavada*) which is neither immanent nor transcendent nor immanent and transcendent both, but some sort of

One they all accept. Swami Vivekananda's interpretation is that all the different sects and cults and systems have a provisional value but they all lead to *advaita-vada* which is the last word of philosophy and religion—and in our country *philosophy and religion are one*. Swami Vivekananda's interpretation is based on the facts of actual religious experience. In the words of Emerson, "consciousness moves along a graded plane." What the Hindus are unanimous about is the spirit of renunciation on which they all insist. Dogmatic monotheism, as we know it, is a very poor affair. It is "a miserable conception" in the words of Plotinus. The last word of Hinduism (as distinguished from Jainism and Buddhism of the *Hima-yana* school) is *Ekamevaadvitiyam* (One without a second). But the One of *Ekamevaadvitiyam* is neither the One of Monotheism nor the One of Pantheism nor the One of the so-called Monism of Modern Europe. It means *atma-tatva* or the Truth about the Self. It means *THOU ART. This Self is the True Absolute*. It is not the reality that underlies appearances, It is neither the Abstract Universal nor the Concrete Universal. It is not the thing-in-itself. It does not underlie anything. It does not overlie anything. It appears as Many, but that is *Avidya* (Ne-science). As long as we see the Many, the One is not. When the true Illumination or Self-realisation comes, the world simply vanishes with its manifold. To those who have arrived at this stage "this world which is so real with all its suns and milky ways"—is nothing. It is not merely a philosophy but the greatest fact of religious experience. *Here is the True Absolute, and the Religion which lays down the discipline (Sadhana) for the realisation of this True Absolute is the Absolute Religion and not that which Hegel and Rudolf Eucken make out to be.*

The Universal Religion of Raja Rammohan is a chimera. No Universal Religion can be based on mere rationalistic Monotheism which rejects Revelation, and even when Monotheism is based on Revelation—of Revelation there are degrees, the final Revelation being *Advaita Sruti*—it has no claim to be called Universal Religion, for it rejects the varieties of religious experience and is perhaps the most intolerant creed that has afflicted mankind. Lecky in his *History of European Morals* has pointedly brought home this truth. That which is supposed to be the worst Polytheism with the worship of Images and Symbols has at least the merit of toleration to com-

mend itself to men. But the vaunted Mono-theism with its colossal pretensions to superiority has no such merit to speak of. It has drenched the earth in human gore. It is against the genius of Hindu civilisation. That is why Raja Rammohan failed and Keshab Chandra Sen failed with all the spirit of their eclecticism, and where Rammohan failed and Keshab failed Rabindranath with his æstheticism is not likely to succeed. Eclecticism is contemptible. Syncretism is colour-less. That is why the Brahmo Samaj to-day is a moribund institution. The house is divided against itself. A tiny, insignificant sect without the ideal of *Sannyasa*, it is split up into three sections not very friendly to one another—and yet the funniest part of the thing is the parade it makes of its so-called cosmopolitanism which is not quite unintelligible, for when a movement is rejected in the country of its origin, it must lean for support on the world without ; but the world knows what is what.

The correct evaluation of Raja Rammohan is that presented by Sir John Woodroffe and Mahatma Gandhi than whom more impartial students it is not easy to conceive. What Sir John Woodroffe said he said as President at a Rammohan anniversary meeting, and his words came as a sharp rebuke to Dr. Brajendra Nath Seal whose exaggerated and pedantic estimate of Raja Rammohan was more than what Sir John could bear. As for the words of Mahatma Gandhi, they have inflicted a blow from the effects of which the Samaj has not yet recovered.

It is only the other day that Mahatma Gandhi launched his criticism of the Arya Samaj and its most fanatical manual known as *Satyartha Prakash*. The Arya Samaj took the criticism so very seriously that it actually thought of sending a deputation to the Mahatma at Sabarmati. Whether the deputation was actually sent I do not remember. But the Mahatma's criticism disturbed the sleep of Lala Lajpat Rai who issued a very ineffectual protest from his retreat at Geneva. A poorer performance than the Lala's protest it is hard to imagine. Dogmatic mono-theism is the creed of the Arya Samaj of the Punjab, but it differs from the Brahmo Samaj in that it has a backbone that is strong for it recognises *Sannyasa* as the highest ideal of life and accepts Revelation, though its interpretation of the Vedas is vitiated by a bias. It has more life than the Brahmo Samaj of Bengal and, in spite of

its grossly vituperative literature, has done more good to the country. In the words of Sir Herbert Risley : "The Aryas start with a definite creed resting upon scriptures of great antiquity and high reputation ; their teaching is of a bold and masculine type and is free from the limp eclecticism which has proved fatal to the Brahmo Samaj" (Risley's People of India, Edition of 1915, page 254).

Our Pessimism with its resulting conception of Mukti cannot be environmental and temperamental. It is the outcome of profound feeling and deep thought. Where in the world is environment so beautiful and sublime ? Such environment is well calculated to make man optimistic, and whoever will survey the history of India will be struck with the festive temperament of her people. The proverbial "thirteen festivals in twelve months" have not yet completely disappeared from the country. What has happened to British India is known only to those who have studied well the present economic and political condition of the country. Many hold that India is getting poorer and poorer and the burden of her sorrows getting heavier and heavier. Sir Michael Sadler who came here the other day mournfully observed : "Smile has departed from the face of Bengal." But even if it be supposed for the sake of argument that India is really getting happier and her cash balance in the banks is steadily mounting higher, does it follow from such admission that optimism must be the necessary consequence of such a happy state of things ? Did the Prince Gautama ever want for anything in his palace with its paraphernalia ? It is a pity that such silly stuff occurs in one of the greatest books of the world—I mean, Hastings' Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics.

Now let us compare Pessimism with Optimism. A strict Optimist is he who can say with Leibnitz that everything is best in this best possible world. If anybody really believes in the truth of this dictum, then he should remain perfectly contented with things as they are. That being so, how can he claim to have moral life at all ? Moral life is the logical consequence of Pessimism. Optimism can never give it. Hence Optimism is unacceptable. It is false and is the outcome of thoughtlessness or theological prejudice or both combined.

Let us come to Meliorism next—Meliorism, the prevailing creed of the West to-day, a cross between Optimism and Pessimism, the creed of infinite rectilinear progress, occasional



set-backs notwithstanding. That Auguste Comte and Frederic Harrison, his well known disciple, should have entertained this unscientific belief is a matter of extreme regret, to say the least, —and the most surprising thing is that William James, who boldly raised the standard of revolt against the despotism of Hegel, could not shake off the spell of the master-wizard, for Hegel's Meliorism he wholly accepted. When James saw disjunction, the greatest disjunction between moral life and the life of Nature certainly could not have escaped his notice, and in Maya-vada was his true deliverance. He came in contact with Swami Vivekananda, was a great admirer of the Swami but he shrugged his shoulders at the mention of Maya and sought refuge in the pluralistic world. If James had accepted Maya-vada, he might have been the greatest philosopher of the West to-day, for not even Plato and Kant could rise above Dualism proper. Then how Huxley, according to whose premiss there is a yawning gulf between the ethical process and the cosmic process between which no harmony is possible, in whose Biology there is no such thing as infinite progress and whose Evolution means regression and reversion as well—how Huxley, one of the frankest men the world has ever produced, could at all hold out the melioristic hope, the most illogical conclusion ever seen, is a phenomenon that is simply inconceivable. Is it a case of Tennyson's "believing where we cannot prove" ? No "Will to Believe" of James can lead one to such belief. And still one believes—but why? "Prejudice" is the only answer. For a world of so much political progress, so much economic progress, so much Will to Power, such belief is but natural. This is THE PSYCHOLOGY OF MELIORISM. INDIA'S PHILOSOPHY ALONE COULD RISE ABOVE HER ENVIRONMENT. The unscientific character of Meliorism I have already established in this paper. That it is *unhistorical* I also firmly maintain. No historical proof can be adduced in support of this creed. If you talk of a God in History, you will have also to recognise the Devil there. On the broad field of History, a ceaseless battle is raging between God on the one hand and the Devil on the other. Sometimes God emerges victorious, sometimes the Devil. This is the TRUE PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY. This view is supported by India's philosophy and this is the conclusion of my historical studies. BARBARISATION OF THE CIVILISED WORLD has happened more than once. What proof is there that barbarisation will not occur again? Many thinkers are of opinion that RE-BARBARISATION IS ALREADY

THERE. Carlyle, Ruskin and Tolstoy contemplated with horror the moral degradation of Europe and sounded a note of warning just in time, but theirs was a voice lost in the wilderness. THE LAST EUROPEAN WAR, its disastrous effects and another such diabolical war—no Armageddon—looming in the horizon are facts about which the less said the better. The tall talk of Right and Justice which assails our ears in times of such wars has never deceived any one who knows what is what. Not that we deny that just wars are possible. Just wars and righteous wars we Hindus frankly recognise. Pacifists as a nation we never were—not even in the Buddhist period of our history. KURUKSHETRA we call DHARMA-KSHETRA. The traditions of the Maha-Bharat and Ramayana, the history of the Rajputs, Mahrattas and Sikhs are sources of perennial inspiration to everyone who has the true Hindu blood in his vein. The Kshatriya's *dharma* and the righteous war the Hindus can therefore very well understand. But the last European War and the war not very far off do not show Right and Justice on any side whatever. IF THIS IS NOT RE-BARBARI-SATION I DO NOT KNOW WHAT IS. Where is then the historical basis of melioristic faith and hope? It is nothing but a poet's dream—this "Parliament of man and Federation of the world." All that we can concede in favour of Meliorism .. that looked at from the ethical standpoint, it has a pragmatic value of its own, but that is because there is an element of truth in it and that truth belongs to Pessimism. The element of hope in Meliorism—the hope of infinite progress—is no hope at all, because it is the vainest hope as Science and History incontestably prove. And if pragmatic value be at all our test in the matter, then the pragmatic value of Pessimism is decidedly higher, for Pessimism is truth and nothing but truth and Meliorism an illusion, a mirage, the philosopher's fiction and the poet's dream. At first it appears very attractive no doubt, but it melts away as we see it through.

MY ARGUMENT THUS IS TRILEMMATIC. There are three alternatives and not more than three—Optimism, Meliorism and Pessimism. A fourth alternative may be that of blank despair and suicide, but this is not the meaning of Pessimism in philosophy and so it should be ignored altogether. Neither Indian Philosophy nor the Philosophy of Schopenhauer is pessimistic in this sense. We all say that there is a way out but the world is essentially an evil. We have got to choose between the three alternatives only. We must call ourselves

either Optimists or Meliorists or Pessimists. There is no escape from this. Now both Optimism and Meliorism have been proved to be false. **PESSIMISM THEREFORE IS THE ONLY TRUTH AND THIS IS THE RIGHT ATTITUDE TOWARDS LIFE.** As for the **POSITIVE PROOFS OF PESSIMISM**, I have also placed them before my readers.

If there is any true view of life, it is Pessimism alone. *It is not a pose.* That Pessimism is a pose, we have heard from RABINDRANATH himself. When the poet visited Europe in the year the Nobel Prize was awarded to him, he contributed an article on Pessimism to the Hibbert Journal of England. It is in that article that Rabindranath called Pessimism a pose. Whether 'pose' is a term rightly applicable to Rabindranath or to the Yogis and Rishis of India is a matter I leave to my readers to decide. I admit that a pseudo-pessimist like Byron may strike an attitude for the sake of effect, but the inner meaning of Pessimism I have discussed at length and so an emphatic protest against Rabindranath's view of Pessimism is absolutely needed before I finish my paper. The two chief reasons that appear to be responsible for Rabindranath's estimate of Pessimism are : (1) the theology of the Brahmo Samaj to which he belongs and (2) the inspiration he derives like Wordsworth from Nature. As for the theology of the Brahmo Samaj, everybody knows that it is optimistic mono-theism with the Unitarian, the Protestant and the eclectic elements in it propped up by convenient texts from the Upanishads ; and as for the poets of Nature it is a remarkable fact that a hopeless confusion of ideas that exists in their mind about the Moral Law and the Law of Nature stands in the way of their true interpretation of human life and activities. Even such a poem as Wordsworth's Ode to Duty may be cited to illustrate the truth of my remark. It is one of the greatest poems in the whole range of literature, and some of the greatest truths have been feelingly uttered by Wordsworth in this poem. But there is one false note which jars on our ears and it is this :

" Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong ;  
And the most ancient Heavens through Thee  
are fresh and strong. "

These are lines of considerable beauty no doubt ; but our poet of Nature here has made a mess of the whole thing as he has confused Moral Law with the Law of Nature—two laws that are quite distinct, for Physical Law is unmoral. Many more

examples may be cited like this, but one typical instance is enough.

That Nature, though unmoral, is beautiful and sublime none can deny. From Nature comes the poet's inspiration—and the contemplation of her beauty, it is quite true, brings not only joy and calm to the mind but causes even trance to certain soft souls. Wordsworth, for instance, was subject to this trance. Whether Rabindranath also falls into this sort of trance I do not know. BUT THIS KIND OF TRANCE IS NOT AND CANNOT BE THE SAMADHI OF OUR YOGIS. Had that been so Wordsworth would never have written like this :

“ Me this uncharter'd freedom tires ;  
I feel the weight of chance desires. ”

The man who passes into *Samadhi* ceases to have any moral struggle at all, perfect self-mastery being his constant experience. The man returning from this state is a new man altogether like Lord Buddha of hallowed memory. This is THE MEANING OF TRANSFIGURATION. On the heights of the mountains and in the depths of the forests were the hermitages of the Yogis of India. The Himalayas and Vindhya-chal, the banks of the Ganga and the Yamuna, the Godavari and the Saraswati, the Narmada, the Sindhu and the Kauvery, the solitary shores of the heaving seas of Malabar and Coromondal, the deep forests of Naimisaranya and Dandakaranya are still vibrant with their spirituality and are the places of pilgrimage to thousands of weary souls craving for the Beyond. Face to face with the Sublime and the Beautiful in Nature they always stood, and it would be absurd to suppose that they had no feeling for Nature because they habitually shut their eyes and retired into themselves. They had all the feelings of the poets and a great deal more. They knew a higher healing power than the healing power of Nature, and they knew that Nature can never be a substitute for the Self. They knew Nature not only as beautiful and sublime, but they knew her also “ red in tooth and claw,” and they knew also the instincts she has implanted in man—the instincts that bring all our woes. The aesthetician's weakness was never theirs and they knew that communion with Nature can never take the place of self-discipline. Wordsworth felt this and that explains his invocation to Duty, “ the stern daughter of the voice of God.” *The apotheosis of Nature is but refined idolatry.* That which is beautiful is not necessarily good and necessarily true. *Satyam, Sivam, Sun-*

*daram* (the True, the Good, the Beautiful), *Raso vai sa* (He is Bliss itself) are texts that have nothing to do with the world of Maya, and even the most innocent joy arising from the contemplation of Nature is not *Paramananda* (Supreme joy) but *Vishayananda* (fleeting joy arising from the world of sense). The *rishis* knew all about the feeling of Wordsworth for Nature and Rabindranath's feeling for Nature—and above all they had a taste of that Joy after tasting which it is impossible for a man to be joyless again ; but wonder of wonders ! their unanimous verdict is that life is full of misery and it is reserved for Rabindranath to say that pessimism is a pose ! In justice to Rabindranath I must say that he has smitten on the chord of sorrow as very few have done, and his best poems I believe are those with a sad note in them. As Shelley has so well said :

“ Our sweetest songs are those  
That tell of saddest thoughts.”

Thus we see that not only the highest life but also the best poetry comes from Pessimism. The poem that to my mind comes straight from the heart of Rabindranath in spite of his theology and attitude towards Nature is that well-known song in his *Gitanjali* :

*Jaraye acche baddha,  
Chharaye jete chai and etc.*

The delicacy of the poem it is impossible to communicate through an English version but the sense is this : “ Entangled am I in the meshes of life. How I yearn to be free from these, yet the thought of freedom fills me with pain. I come to You, Lord, to pray for Mukti. I know that you alone are to be sought after, but when I look within and see the number of desires there, I feel ashamed of myself and the word Mukti sticks in my throat. The dust of earth covers my soul and brings to me death after death. I hate all this from the bottom of my heart and yet cannot help loving all this. That is why I tremble with fear when I come to You to pray for my good.”

What is all this but Pessimism—not THE SOARING PESSIMISM OF THE HINDU, the Pessimism that leads to Mukti, but the very wail and groan of despair. That being so, does it lie in the poet's mouth to say that Pessimism is a pose ? Why again do his disciples say that *vairagya sadhan* is no part of their *dharma*, it is enough if they feel joy in life, hold communion with Nature, read poetry at leisure and visit the *mandir*

(church) now and then to hear a song, a prayer and a sermon? Why is it that they do not admit that there is a higher chastity than that of the married state and why is it that they have such rooted antipathy against the ideal of *Sannyasa*? Unless they come forward with a straight reply to these straight questions, I am bound to say that RABINDRANATH'S VOICE IS NOT THE VOICE OF INDIA AND HE IS NOT AT ALL OUR REPRESENTATIVE POET. The man who will interpret India must have reverence for India's ideals. The man who will interpret India must enter into the spirit of her cultural continuity and cultural history from the Vedic times to THE PRESENT AGE—THE AGE OF RAMAKRISHNA. If the people of the West fail to understand that Rabindranath's message is his own message—for Rabindranath is a man of genius in his own way and has his share of originality though *originality does not mean anything absolutely new*—, for that matter if they fail to understand that his message is the message of the Brahmo Samaj based on Unitarianism-cum-Protestantism-cum-Eclecticism embellished with those texts from the Upanishads which suit its purpose, or for that matter if they fail to understand that his voice is the voice of the poets of Nature and the so-called mystic poets of the West with slight variations here and there, then it is the duty of India to disabuse the mind of the people of the West of the false impression they are labouring under. That in Rabindranath's nature there is a strong element of Bhakti—that he is a Bhakta goes without saying—that he has also drawn much inspiration from the poets of Vaishnavism, Kabir and the Bauls I readily admit. Still the reservation with which he has spoken and his suppression of all the distinctive features of our Bhakti-cult—the reservation and suppression due to the creed of his Church—stand in the way of our accepting him as the representative poet of India. I wonder how his voice can ever pass for the voice of our country. If the mellifluous lyrics of the Vaishnava poets of Bengal which Mr. Chapman of the Imperial Library of Calcutta is translating into English—the lyrics in which the names of Radha and Krishna occur again and again, the lyrics without the least reservation or suppression to suit the so-called refined modern taste,—if these lyrics of sublimated love are taken by the West for the voice of India, then it will be partly right, for the voice of India they partly are. THE FULL MESSAGE OF INDIA WAS DELIVERED TO THE WEST BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA ALONE—BY FAR THE

GREATEST MAN OF THE AGE NEXT ONLY TO RAMAKRISHNA. Look where you may, you will not light on one who has the realisation, fire and force to repeat the feat of that prophetic soul—and not only did he deliver his message to the West with the boldness which was his, but he also saw THE VISION OF AWAKENED INDIA not because he was an optimist, not because he was a meliorist, but because he believed in the Great Law of our country's Pessimism that every rise has its fall and every fall its rise.

KAMAKHYA NATH MITRA

CONCLUDED

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## A WESTERN REVELATION OF THE SOUL OF INDIA

K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRIGAL, B. A., B. L.

QUITE recently I came across a book, entitled *India and the English*, written by Barbara Wingfield-Stratford and published in 1922. I thought at first that it was a mere globe-trotter's effusion. But I found that the Right Hon'ble Mr. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri had written a preface to it. He says in it : " Art and music, sport, the monsoons—nothing of human interest escapes notice in these pages—all illuminated by a clear understanding and vivified by the touch of sympathy. The book has problems for the wise and lessons for the ignorant." Hence I felt interested in the book. My interest turned into delighted appreciation as I read through the pages. Insight into India's soul is rare even among Indians—'educated' as they call themselves—; but the talented author of this book has shown wonderful insight into India's soul in her valuable book.

We cannot and do not expect such insight from the average European in India. He comes with, or soon gets up, a prejudice against India. The author says : " For there never was a more philistine community on this earth than Anglo-India. Art, literature, music, practically do not exist for them !" They are lacking in sympathy and imagination. The author says : " But on the whole this miserable spirit of race-snobbery is almost universal." On the other hand, as she says : " Never was a real rapprochement between England and India more needed than it is at present. East and West have still so much to learn from each other. How much, for instance, would not the weary, war-worn peoples of Europe benefit by a leaven of that calmness and wise detachment, that abstraction of outlook and infinite patience that characterise Indian thought at its best ?"

Miss Wingfield-Stratford says : " Perhaps the greatest charm about life in India is, however, its peace and leisure." About Indian character she says : " The Indians are—once you begin to know and understand them even a little—one of the most charming and delightful races of people imaginable." She refers to their " unfailing courtesy and distinction of manner" and says : " Not the acquired politeness of convention and self-interest, but the courtesy that arises from natural good-heartedness, a real desire to give pleasure and an instinctive unself-conscious tact." She points out how Indians never wantonly take life. " The portentous doctrine of sport, held so sacred by Britons, is a sealed book to the average Indian. . . . But the English habit of

killing innocent beasts and birds simply for the sport of the thing is to him a mystery. Taking life, destroying, mutilating, does not give him the exquisite pleasure it affords his highly-civilised white ruler."

Her estimate of the Indian peasant is equally full of true insight. She says : " His strength lies rather in his quietude and aloofness, in spirituality of outlook that runs all through the often grotesque worship of his local deity." Sir W. Sleeman once said in his famous *Rambles and Recollections* : " I am much attracted to the agricultural classes of India generally and I have found among them some of the best men I have ever known. The peasantry in India have generally very good manners, and are exceedingly intelligent, from having so much more leisure and unreserved and easy intercourse with those above them." The author pays a just tribute to their simplicity and affection for relations and says : " It is significant, too, that there are no work-houses in India. . . . . One hardly ever sees a professional beggar except in large towns like Bombay and Calcutta. If only a little of this spirit of kindly and self-sacrificing family feeling were to arise in England, how quickly the problem of pauperism would be solved." She says again : " An innate, contemplative calm is his, redolent of the soil he cultivates, that lifts him above the power of circumstances, and gives him, illiterate and unsophisticated as he is, an age-old culture, an earnestness, *a kind of spiritual refinement that marks him* apart from the poor and needy of all other nations. Let those who advise the indiscriminate adoption of Western civilisation, with all its drab utilitarianism, its sordid squalor and its spiritual sterility by the peoples of the East pause and think of this before they endeavour to destroy good and evil alike, all that is not standardized and docketed and squeezed dry of individuality."

This rarity of insight justifies us in expecting in the author a clear vision of the soul of India, and our expectation is found to be already justified. We in South India, who are frantically flinging away the real life of the real India, may well ponder over these words of hers : " Then, lastly, there are a good many thinking, moderate men who are sincerely of opinion that India's natural spirituality of outlook and load of religious tradition unfit her for the modern battle for commercial success and economic prosperity. These elements of unfaith are to be found principally in Bengal and Southern India, the centre and north holding imperturbably to true old ways. Still, this spirit of revolt has had little effect upon India as a whole. The masses still dream on in the villages, perform their worship exactly as their ancestors have done for hundreds of years before them, give honour to Brahmans, and envisage the problems of existence with that quiet detachment which is the innermost strength of the Indian character. *The true Indian type will*

*always be the same.*" About the Indian religion she points out : "The greatness of spiritual India was less in its mystery and strangeness than in the great unity of purpose underlying its multitudinous ramifications ..... The doctrine of the great ninth-century reformer Sankaracharya, for instance, which has to-day a vast number of adherents, is one of an austere mono-theism beside which Christianity, in its commonly accepted form, is a polytheistic creed. .... It is the religion of India which has made her civilisation what it has been. *For of all peoples the Indians alone have held consistently to one main religion throughout the ages from the earliest dawn of their history as a nation* ..... Looked at, however, from any point of view, the noble simplicity of the language, the purity of the worship of nature and wonder at her greatness, the fresh and primal vigour of the *Rig Veda* make it a monument of a far more advanced order than any other of equal antiquity, and a fit starting point for the lofty and mystic faith of Hindustan." In equally just and true words she says : "If there were no other proof of its religious vitality, of the underlying spiritual unity that binds its ramifying components together, the facts of Hinduism's indestructibility, its bloodless victories over all that would have destroyed it, its power of absorption would be enough. .... This absorbent quality of Hinduism is all the more curious because it has never been a fighting or even proselytising religion." Nay, she goes further and says : "Our own Christianity has dwindled in our hands from its first glorious state to a mechanical device for maintaining the respectabilities of life. We were entrusted with this priceless treasure, and through our own laziness and worldliness the vital sap within it has been allowed to dry up. Buddhism is too pessimistic and apathetic to help us, Mahomedanism is too narrow. The Hindu alone has a living religion which really means something to him, which he possesses as a heritage and a right, not as a worked-up neurotic effort of conscience, and which is large enough not only to suffice him but to pour some of its strengthening vitality into the wilting faith of the West. .... Lord Christ—Lord Krishna—do not the noblest heights of these two great religions meet ? And may not the majestic beauties of the Hindu religion help us to a better understanding of our own ?" She rightly points out "the keynote of Krishna worship" as "the immanence of God in nature and man." Another great interpreter of India's culture—Sister Nivedita—says about Krishnaism : "To the Vaishnava lover Brindavan is the heart of man, where the eternal play of the love of God continues."

Bound up with the religions of India is its social life. The Indian caste system has been generally misunderstood and abused. All the same it lives and will survive its foes. Mr. Vincent Smith says about

it in *The Oxford History of India* : " The system grew up of itself in remote antiquity because it suited India, and will last for untold centuries because it still suits India on the whole, in spite of its many inconveniences." Miss Wingfield Stratford says : " The caste system supplies, before all else, a standard of social obligation. . . . . But caste is more than a social obligation, it is also a very powerful trades-union system. . . . . Thus blacklegging is totally unknown in India wherever caste is strictly kept. . . . . It certainly makes, on the whole, for efficiency. . . . . Another aspect of caste life which is not recognised is the true democracy of the system. For caste confers a dignity upon even the humblest of its followers." In respect of the now persecuted and depressed Brahmans and their glibly asserted past domination she says : " The Brahman is revered first and foremost as the repository and conserver of the sacred lore of Hindustan. . . . . They kept the flame of Hinduism burning throughout the superficial domination of Buddhist thought, and in the darkness of mediæval India they were the core and stronghold of the oppressed and fainting spirit of the Hindu race. Even to-day, though their temporal power is on the decline, they are still dispensers of esoteric knowledge, skilled in sacred doctrines, saturated with ancient lore and learning. Therefore, when an Indian does reverence to a Brahman he is honouring the sacred office rather than the man, just as a soldier is told that he salutes the King's uniform rather than his officers." Pursuing the subject of caste system further, she says : " It develops a spirit of comradeship, and mutual helpfulness. . . . . Then caste encourages cleanliness of person, refinement of appetite, self-control and regularity of life. . . . . Taking it altogether, a system that creates self-respect and dignity in the individual, that encourages loyalty and comradeship and, in the main, upholds the decencies of life, is not one to be scrapped without due consideration and the provision of an adequate substitute."

The author's insight into Indian art is equally remarkable. Indian art, like Indian character, is a child of the Himalayas. In the holy Himalayas great rivers rise ; they compel the vapour-laden winds to give the blessed rain to India ; and they form a natural barrier " keeping in the essential Indianness of India." She says : " Without this barrier, it is probable that the Indo-Aryan race would never have kept their national character so distinct and inviolate through the ages. . . . The greatest attraction of this mountain range probably lay in its appeal to the imagination—the cool place of snows, the home of holy mystery and romance." In the same breath as this vast wonder of God's creation can be mentioned, though with bated breath, that wonder of man's creation, that dream in marble which shines with the married radiance of the light of the crescent and the beauty of the white lotus—

the Taj Mahal. The author says about the Indo-Saracenic architecture : " Their architecture is symbolic of their mentality—the architecture of a people with an eye above all for outline and massing, a desert people who visualize mosque, mausoleum or palace as seen in silhouette against a sunset sky rather than in the detail the Hindu loves to elaborate. There is nothing finer in all architecture than the grandeur and simplicity, the mingling of a clear, severe asceticism and a calm and happy serenity that characterises Indo-Saracenic buildings of the best periods." She says about the Taj that it " is a true dream-palace of delight, the essence of that strange sense of far-off romance that steals over one on hot summer nights, when the scent of roses and jasmine mingle in the still air." " Mysterious and only half-understood, it has the glamour of amorous Eastern nights and the virginal aloofness of Himalayan snows." Mr. Havell has stated and shown that the Taj was the spontaneous outcome of Indian art and thought, a blending of Indian and Saracenic art. Miss Wingfield-Stratford says : " The delicate graciousness and attention to symbolic detail of the Hindu mingle with the Saracenic feeling for silhouette and love of grand massed effects." The designer of the Taj—Ustad Isa—deserves the world's homage for having dreamt and created a building which is " not only one of the loveliest buildings of the world, not even the greatest monument of human love alone, but also the supreme symbol of spiritual unity of India, of the infinite calm strength of its undying ideal of beauty and goodness." The very core of India's artistic ideal is thus rightly shown by the author : " Hindu art at its best has always been an attempt of singular success to catch the spirit of the subject—usually sacred—to be represented in stone or paper, rather than its mere outward form. Indian sculptors and artists were as capable as any one of a faithful and exact reproduction of nature, but it is characteristic of their mentality that mere imitation did not appeal to them. Elaboration of physical detail they held to be little more than a technical knack, and although they sometimes indulged in a *tour de force* of minute accuracy in the portrayal of animal or plant life, and occasionally even in the representation of a human being, yet when modelling or painting the holy forms they loved they strove after a higher ideal,—that of bringing out in the lines of the body, its pose and atmosphere, the divine attributes, the vigour or the serenity or the compassion of the god or goddess portrayed. This artistic theory of the insistence on the character and inner life of the thing portrayed, its aura rather than a literal rendering of its outward form, is one which some of the artists of the very newest European school are just discovering.....It will be curious if, after all, Europe, sick of the barrenness of modern artistic achievement, goes back to learn of old

India. Stranger things have happened. Be that as it may, in no other country, European or Asiatic, has the representation of the stupendous qualities of divine beings, the sense of the supernatural, been so successfully attempted. Never was stone so imbued with the very Personality of God as the Trimurthi of Elephanta—the Creator, the Preserver and the Destroyer—with its majestic sense of Eternity. Never was the glorification of divine and human love portrayed with such loving tenderness and nobility as in the “Marriage of Siva and Parvathi” of the same cave temple. Such an idealistic school of sculpture could only proceed from a people whose religious and artistic lives were in such close harmony as to be almost one.” She points out how such Buddhist paintings as that of “Mother and Child before Buddha” at Ajanta are full of wonderful loveliness and suggestiveness ; how Akbar revived Indian painting ; and how the Rajput and the Kangra schools “began to produce masterpieces that have come down to us, little hunting and night scenes, episodes from the great religious epics.” “The Kangra school, indeed, flourished until as recently as 1905, when a terrible earthquake obliterated the larger part of this district, and killed art and artists alike.” The modern Bengal school has “endeavoured to shed not only the corrupting influences of cheap European Art, but the decadences that have been creeping upon the art of India for centuries, and to go back to the spirituality and freshness of the ancient Buddhist frescoes of the Golden Age, and the magnificent colouring of the Mughal and Rajput schools.” She asks in a spirit of sympathetic enkindling passion : “Will not the gods once more confer the glories of artistic expression upon a nation that strives thus, even though but here and there, to keep the fire alight?” She answers herself in a prophetic mood : “The contemplative nature and calm contentment of the Hindu character, the richness of the country and its glorious traditions all combine to give Indian art its largeness and peace, and it in turn reflects and concentrates the vitality and spiritual power of that India whose unity of thought has always been a reality and whose perfect unity shall some day be no longer a dream.”

*(To be continued)*

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## EDITORIAL NOTES

### REORGANISATION OF HINDU SOCIETY.

A wave of depression is now passing over India. Though it is mainly economical and political in its superficial aspect it has much deeper causes than mere economical and political. There is discontentment everywhere and in every sphere of the national life. The situation has been aggravated no doubt by a foreign domination, and the consequent economical poverty. The main problem of India has become to-day the bread-problem, and assuredly the political condition is responsible for it to not a small extent. Naturally the intelligentsia of the land is deeply stirred into a revolt against the modern Government. The idea behind this expressed and unexpressed revolt of the thinking man of the country is that, with the removal of the modern political conditions, there will come the hey-day for the land. But there is a great fallacy in this supposition.

It is a stern fact of life that nothing can happen without a previous cause. The present state of disorganisation and weakness of the Hindus is directly caused by some grave tendencies which have been working in it for some time past—the tendencies that have undermined to-day all national efficiency and strength by bringing about disruption and disintegration among its elements. The causes that are producing great social upheavals and seething discontentment in the Western society have been in existence in another form in our own land for a long time. The heartless dominance of the classes over the masses, the water-tight compartments of social life, the hide-bound caste system that naturally produces a narrow outlook of life, and above all, the meaningless rigidity of social structures, all these are mainly responsible for the present decadence of the Hindu society. But the modern Hindu society has to face a very grave situation,—it has been put between Scylla and Charybdis, and its leaders must steer it clear of the two dangers : one section of the people is still continuing to be sticklers to the letter of the law voting for no-change in the method of living, in spite of all changes of conditions and environments ; while another section is voting for a complete breaking down of the old structure and erecting a new one in its stead in imitation of the West. But the majority of

the people are quite thoughtless about their future. They take to the more easy course of life, the life of drift. So we see at present in the Hindu society no force present that can unite and combine all the straggling elements for one common good. And that is the very reason why we notice that in spite of horrible communal atrocities perpetrated by the non-Hindus upon the Hindus, they could go unchallenged and unresented. All who are conversant with current events of modern India know it very well that the supreme moment has come now for the Hindu society to check all further disruption, bring about more cohesion and re-organise itself at least for self-protection. Otherwise, a still darker day is awaiting it.

But, in the face of the existing disintegrating tendencies, such a union is unthinkable. It is a plain fact that unless we remodel our social life and completely uproot all these disintegrating elements, any kind of social cohesion is impossible. The main attack of the social reformer has been hitherto upon the caste system, and many even to-day sincerely believe that unless there is a general levelling down of caste and creed, there is no chance of getting back the social cohesion. But, to us it seems that caste is not so much responsible for this disintegration, as the fight for privilege that was engendered by the caste system, which again was brought about by the forgetting of the real basis of the system of Varnas which is principally Dharma that prescribes respective duties for each and every varna. When man forgets his duty created by the respective position he holds in the society, he begins to blunder, and every such blundering conduct of his paves only the path of his fall. That exactly has been the case with the Hindu society. The members of the upper classes neglecting their respective duties or Dharma simply wanted to trade upon their prestige and birth, and clamour for privileges. And naturally that produced so much cleavage between caste and caste and so much resentment and animosity between the classes and the masses. But, any way, the caste system is fast losing its rigidity and hold upon the Hindu society. Excepting perhaps Southern India and Deccan, in all other parts of the country caste system is principally maintained only in the case of marriage ; in all other respects, the lines of demarcation are fast disappearing. And that is the natural outcome of economical necessity and pressure of environment. But, although the rigidity of the lines of demarcation is vanishing and the differences fading away in practical life, yet the old

tendencies and the old narrow outlook of life are still persisting on in the mind of the average man, which forms a formidable barrier for him to be united for a common cause. So, to us the main problem appears to be not so much the breaking down of the caste system whose lines of demarcation are already vanishing, as bringing about a radical change in the mentality or the outlook of life of an average Hindu. An average Hindu has to be brought out of the poky corner of his little home and made to feel that he is one with the whole nation in its spiritual culture and heritage. This education of the average Hindu, this change of his mentality in the light of Spirit, is what Swami Vivekananda meant by his man-making religion, his root-and-branch reform. Let there be thousand and one castes, let there be as many external differences as there are faces, that would matter very little if the hearts are united in a common purpose, in a common culture, in a common ideal. And there an average modern Hindu radically differs from say a Mahomedan ; a Mahomedan, however illiterate and uneducated he may be, feels himself to be an integral part of the Kingdom of his Prophet, Mahomed, and as such it is his first duty to safeguard the interest of his Prophet's Kingdom, the interest of his Islam. And so however insignificant and poor he may be, when the call comes to him for a sacrifice of his self in the interest of that Islam and its followers, he is never found to be lagging behind ; he is ready to pour out the whole of his heart's blood for the cause of his Prophet. But quite different is the case with the Hindus, a Hindu closes the door of his house and seeks to keep himself in safety if the house of his Hindu neighbour is attacked by non-Hindus. This mental isolation of interest and a lack of that burning love for his faith are the main reasons why an average Hindu becomes an easy victim of the united attack of non-Hindus. There was a time when Hindus also felt the same animation in the name of their religion, in the name of their Dharma, and did not hesitate to lay down their lives for their God. There are ample instances of this in our ancient history, but with the efflux of time and the working of the disintegration owing to the narrow outlook of social life, the society has come to such a pass that its members have completely forgotten the larger aspect of life, the Virat Purusha, and the recokning of values is being done with an eye to the immediate concerns of an individual life. And therefore, selfishness has got itself so ingrained in his temperament that

the average Hindu finds it very difficult to take that broad national outlook of life, sacrificing his little concerns for the sake of his nation and religion. We repeat again that this mentality has to be changed by remodelling the social structure, by reshaping the educational institutions and by constant urge upon the social mind to look up to its supreme ideal of national life.

By remodelling the social structure of the Hindus, we do not mean the pulling down of the corner stones and main pillars of support of that ancient edifice, but the demolishing of the extraneous additions and side-developments that have taken place in comparatively recent time. By all means, the Dharma aspect of Varna has to be resuscitated, and classification has to be made with reference to Dharma, or according to the division of labour ; but no scope should be given for the scramble for privilege. And thus gradually the Society must emerge from the modern fossilized condition of its numerous castes, or better, sub-castes that sit to-day like a millstone on its neck. These sub-castes have neither any scriptural basis nor are they founded upon any kind of utility, nor can they be supported by any logic of commonsense. They are purely the relics of the compartment system of the village community. They might have had their utility when they were instituted, but to-day, with the change of circumstances, with the widening of the social life, with the decadence of the narrow village community, these compartments have ceased to exist. Then, why cling to the dilapidated relic of it ? Then again, many of the usages that have created broad gulfs between one community and another in the Hindu society, have become meaningless and are irrational. Originally, they might have had a purpose, but to-day they have become more a source of schisms and disintegration. These usages and customs have to be completely changed in order to bring about a unity of feature and consequent facility for inter-relation and thereby cement the straggling elements into a coherent whole.

The leaders of the Hindu society belonging to different parts of India must come to a common understanding on this point and set the ball rolling by starting a definite organisation, who will follow the scriptures in the light of commonsense, and not of *Deshacharas* and *Lokacharas*, and thereby the path for future united Hindu India will be paved. For instance, if the Brahmins of the different parts of India can come to agreement to follow certain minimum rules of conduct which would

keep up their Brahminical nature and try to establish inter-relations among themselves, through inter-marriage and other social intercourse, they will be strengthened not only socially but biologically also the blood will be more vitalised and there will come more virility and manhood to the race. Moreover, it will bring more or less a common standard of life throughout India. The same course for other castes also. Of course, we are for the line of least resistance; and society, like all other organisms, always takes the line of least resistance. Violent methods of reconstruction and reformation have produced often more disastrous results than good. So, if the lover of Hindu Society sincerely believes in the social reconstruction and social revitalisation in order that the Hindu Society may maintain its own against all onslaughts of outsiders, then the best thing for him to do is to remain within the fold of the Society itself and carry the Society along with him by educating the mind of the Society by his own example and precept. Radicalism and iconoclastic tendencies can only lead to their votaries being thrown out of the fold completely, and such methods will fail ultimately to do any constructive work for the Society, as it has been already experienced by some of the radical movements of the country.

Next comes the remodelling of educational institutions. It is in the school-room that a nation is made and as education has become a transferred subject to-day, Indians are supposed to have at least a greater control over the educational policy of the land, and a very great advantage can be gained by proper direction of this educational policy of the country. The mind of every Indian youth has to be surcharged with the love for his country, for his religion, for his Faith, and all efforts must be made to implant that ideal in his mind. And in this respect, we must say that as the education of a child begins at home, the parents have a greater responsibility in shaping the minds of the children than the schools or colleges. The seed has to be laid early even in the cradle and the parents must try to inculcate this high ideal of service and self-abnegation for a greater life into the mind of their young ones. Then, it can be safely predicted that in two generations India would be quite different from what it is to-day.

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## NEWS AND REPORTS

The Bengali Calendar gives the following dates as the *Janma tithis* (birthdays), for the year 1926, of :—

Swami Vivekananda..	Wednesday	6th January.
Swami Brahmananda..	Saturday	16th ..
Sri Ramakrishna Dev..	Sunday	14th February.

The public celebration of Swami Vivekananda's birthday in Madras is on Sunday the 10th January, 1926.

### SWAMI PRABHAVANANDA IN PORTLAND, OREGON

*The Secretary, The Vedanta Society, Portland, Oregon writes :—*

Much delighted, indeed, were those interested in Vedanta in Portland, to learn that the Associate at the Temple in San Francisco, Swami Prabhavananda, would visit us during September. Swami Prabhavananda arrived the evening of September 22nd and the Friday following gave his first lecture in Library Hall, Public Library, to a very appreciative and unusually attentive audience. In fact, so interested did the audience become, it seemed spellbound, quite some seconds elapsing after the Swami stepped off the stage before anybody moved. The subject at this lecture was "First Principles of Spirituality," which so impressed the people that they immediately sought to know when more lectures would be given. The second lecture was given on Sunday morning, September 27th, in the Assembly Hall, of the Portland Hotel, the subjects being "Universality of Vedanta"—"Realization and Its Methods." At this time another appreciative audience greeted the Swami, which was also the case at his evening address, subject "Sub-conscious Mind and Its Control". The audience at this time was well increased, and inquiries began coming in as to whether there would be a possibility of keeping the Swami in Portland. Monday, September 28th, another large audience greeted the Swami in his address upon "Religion of Love," with the same rapt attention as had been previously manifested. Tuesday, September 29th, the subject taken under consideration was "Super-conscious Vision". Here the Swami excelled, carrying the audience beyond all expectation with his simplicity and clearness of vision. Wednesday, September 30th, with the subject of "Raja Yoga or the Mystic Path" the speaker cleared the confused conceptions of many, showing very plainly in a definite and concise fashion, the value of an understanding of Raja Yoga. So intense had the interest become, that upon this last of the series of lectures, a class was readily formed, something like 125 attending. These classes, four in number, dealing mainly with Raja Yoga, were also held in the Assembly Hall of the Portland Hotel, beginning Friday, October 2nd. More and more during these classes requests came in for a resident Swami, so names were taken of those interested and at the end of the class-work a meeting was held, when a form of organization took place, selecting a committee, who selected a President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Another meeting will be held shortly when steps will be taken in detail and a place selected in which the work can be satisfactorily carried on.

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entered; दिशः the deity of the quarters श्रोत्रं भूत्वा having become the hearing कर्णौ into the two ears प्राविशत् entered; ओषधि कस्त्यः the deity of herbs and trees लोमानि भूत्वा having become hairs त्वचं into the skin प्राविशत् entered; चन्द्रमाः Chandrama मनः भूत्वा having become the mind हृदयं the heart प्राविशत् entered; मृत्युः the god of death अपानः the Apana भूत्वा having become नाभिं the navel प्राविशत् entered; आपः the god of sapidity रेतः भूत्वा having become semen शिष्टं the generative organ प्राविशत् entered.

4. Then Agni, having become speech, entered into the mouth.

Vayu, having become smell, entered into the nostrils.

Aditi, becoming sight, entered into the eyes.

The deity of the quarters, having become hearing, entered into the ears.

The deity of the herbs and trees, having become hairs, entered into the skin.

Chandrama, having become mind, entered into the heart.

The god of death, having become Apana, entered into the navel.

The god of sapidity, having become semen, entered into the generative organ.

तमश्नापिपासे अब्रूतामावाभ्यामभिप्रजानीहीति । ते अब्रवीदेतास्वेव वां देवतास्वामजाम्येतासु भागिन्यौ करोमीति । तस्माद्यस्यै कस्यै च देवतायै हविर्गृह्यते भागिन्यावेवास्वामश्नापिपासे भवतः ॥ ५ ॥

इति द्वितीय खण्डः ।

अश्नापिपासे Hunger and thirst तं to Him अब्रूतां said आवाभ्यां for us (आयतनं place) अभिप्रजानीहि think. (सः He, the Atman) ते to them अब्रवीत् said वां to you both एतासु these देवतासु gods एव verily आभजामि assign एतासु of these भागिन्यौ co-sharer करोमि make. तस्मात् Therefore यस्यै कस्यै for whatsoever देवतायै gods हविः offerings गृह्यते is taken अस्याम् of that अश्नापिपासे hunger and thirst भागिन्यौ co-sharer एव verily भवतः become.

(Then) hunger and thirst spoke unto Him: 'Assign a place for us.' He told them: 'I allocate you to these very gods, I make you their co-sharers'. And therefore, for whatsoever gods offering is taken, hunger and thirst become verily the co-sharers of that.

[*Hunger and thirst become verily co-sharers—since, the gods enjoy the offerings through hunger and thirst, i.e., the desire for food and drink.*]

End of the Second Chapter.

# Aitareya-Upanishad

## CHAPTER III.

स ईक्षतेमे नु लोकाश्च लोकपालाश्चाग्रेभ्यः सृजा इति ॥ १ ॥

सः He ईक्षत thought, इमे these लोकाः the worlds च and लोकपालाः the regent gods च also (सृष्टाः आसन् have been created), एभ्यः for these अन्नं food सृजे shall create इति thus.

He thought (again) : 'The worlds and their regent gods have been created ; (now) I should create food for them.'

सोऽपोऽभ्यतपत्ताभ्योऽभितप्तभ्यो मूर्तिरजायत । या वै सा मूर्तिरजाय-  
तान्नं वै तत् ॥ २ ॥

सः He अपः over the water अभ्यतपत् brooded ताभ्यः from those अभितप्तभ्यः thus brooded upon मूर्तिः form अजायत was born याः what वै surely साः मूर्तिः that form अजायत was created अन्नं food वै verily तत् that.

(Then) He brooded over the water, and from that thus brooded upon, came out form. And the form thus created is verily the food.

[Note—The inner significance of the mantra is that the will of the Atman for further creation made it possible for the causal and subtle matter to evolve into gross forms. The seed evolves into a tree, and what makes it possible to evolve is the same Divine Will which is called in common parlance the Law of Nature. And it is this gross form of matter which sustains the subtle as it were : we cannot understand or conceive the causal without the help of the gross, the subtle depending upon the gross for its cognition. Hence the gross or 'form' is termed here as 'Food.' Further, the gross objects have been called food as they are enjoyed by the senses and their presiding *devatas*.]

तदेतदभिसृष्टं पराङ्मयजिघांसत्तद्वाचाऽजिघृक्षत्तन्नाशक्नोद्वाचा ग्रहीतुम् ।  
स यद्वैनद्वाचाऽग्रहैष्यदभिव्याहृत्य ईर्षान्नमलप्स्यत् ॥ ३ ॥

तत् then अभिसृष्टं having been created एतत् this (food) पाङ्ग having turned away अत्यजिघांस्त् attempted to run away. तत् that

वाचा by speech अजिघृक्षत् wanted to seize तत् that न not अशक्नोत् could वाचा with speech ग्रहीतुं to seize. यदि if सः he वाचा with speech एन्त् this अग्राहेष्यत् could seize अभिप्राप्य having uttered the name इ एव verily अन्नं food अन्नपस्यत् would have been satisfied.

Then this food, having been created, turned and attempted to run away. He tried to seize it by speech; but he could not get hold of it by speech. If he had seized it by speech, man would have verily been satisfied by mere utterance of food.

तत्प्राणेनाजिघृक्षत्तन्नाशक्नोत्प्राणेन ग्रहीतुं स यद्वैनत्प्राणेनाग्राहेष्यदभिप्राप्य हैवानमन्नपस्यत् ॥ ४ ॥

तन्मक्षुषाऽजिघृक्षत्तन्नाशक्नोत्क्षुषा ग्रहीतुं स यद्वैनन्मक्षुषाऽग्राहेष्यददृष्ट्वा हैवानमन्नपस्यत् ॥ ५ ॥

तच्छ्रोत्रेणाजिघृक्षत्तन्नाशक्नोच्छ्रोत्रेण ग्रहीतुं स यद्वैनच्छ्रोत्रेणाग्राहेष्यच्छ्रुत्वा हैवानमन्नपस्यत् ॥ ६ ॥

तत्त्वचाऽजिघृक्षत्तन्नाशक्नोत्त्वचा ग्रहीतुं स यद्वैनत्त्वचाऽग्राहेष्यत्स्पृष्ट्वा हैवानमन्नपस्यत् ॥ ७ ॥

तन्मनसाऽजिघृक्षत्तन्नाशक्नोन्मनसा ग्रहीतुं स यद्वैनन्मनसाऽग्राहेष्यद्भ्यात्वा हैवानमन्नपस्यत् ॥ ८ ॥

तच्छिश्नेनाजिघृक्षत्तन्नाशक्नोच्छिश्नेन ग्रहीतुं स यद्वैनच्छिश्नेनाग्राहेष्यद्विस्तृज्य हैवानमन्नपस्यत् ॥ ९ ॥

तत् that प्राणेन with Prana अजिघृक्षत् wanted to grasp. तत् that न not अशक्नोत् was able प्राणेन with Prana ग्रहीतुं to catch. स he यदि if इ verily प्राणेन अग्राहेष्यत् could catch अभिप्राप्य having breathed only अन्नम् food अन्नपस्यत् would have been satisfied. 4.

क्षुषा with the eyes. दृष्ट्वा by mere sight. 5.

श्रोत्रेण with the ear, श्रुत्वा having heard only. 6.

त्वचा with the skin, the sense of touch, स्पृष्ट्वा having touched only. 7.

मनसा with the mind, ध्यात्वा having thought only. 8.

शिश्नेन with the generative organ, विस्तृज्य by emitting only. 9.

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

" Let the lion of Vedanta roar."

" Let me tell you, strength, strength is what we want

And the first step in getting strength is to uphold

The Upanishads and believe that 'I am the Atman.' "

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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## PRAYER

विश्वेश्वर नमस्तुभ्यं विश्वात्मा विश्वकर्मकृत् ।

विश्वभुग्विश्वमायुस्त्वं विश्वक्रीडारति प्रभुः ॥

नमः शान्तात्मने तुभ्यं नमो गुह्यतमाय च ।

अचिन्त्यायाप्रमेयाय अनादिनिधनाय च ॥

○ BEISANCE to Thee, O Lord of the universe.  
Thou art the Universal Soul, of universal action.  
Thou art the devourer of the universe and Thou art again  
the Universal life. Thou art the Master of this wonderful  
sport of the universe.

I bow down to Thee, O Soul of Peace ; I bow down  
to Thee, O Secret of all secrets. My obeisance to Thee,  
Who is beyond all thought and limitation, Who is beginningless  
and endless !

MAITRAYANI UPANISHAD

## GOSPEL OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

[*Dakshineswar—September, 1884*]

(*Continued from page 245*)

### II

**H**AZRAH is telling his beads in the northern corridor. The Master comes and seats himself before him and takes in his hands Hazrah's rosary. M. and Bhavanath have accompanied him.

*Sri Ramakrishna (to Hazrah) :* "Look, I cannot tell beads, no, no ! I can—by the left hand ; but not that (*i. e.* not the repetition of the mantra)."

With this he exerts himself a little to take the holy name ; but even at the outset he plunges into Samadhi !

Long he sits in this superconscious state, the rosary still hanging in his hand ; the devotees look on in speechless wonder and so also Hazrah from his own seat.

After a long hour, the Master comes down to normal consciousness and exclaims, "I am hungry"—words which he often utters to bring himself back to the plane of normal life.

As M. is going to get something for the Master to eat, the Master says, "No, I shall first visit the Kali's shrine."

The Master is traversing the metalled courtyard on his way southward to the temple and from a distance salutes the Siva in the twelve temples. On his left stands the temple of Radhakanta : Him he sees and salutes. Having then reached the Mother's shrine, he sits on the priest's seat and offers some flowers at the lotus feet of the Mother ; and also puts some on his own head. As he returns he wants Bhavanath to accompany him with the green cocoanut and holy water offered to the Mother.

Even as he comes back to his room—M. and Bhavanath are with him—he makes obeisance to Hazrah. Hazrah cries out, "What are you doing ! O what are you doing ?" Says Sri Ramakrishna, "Confess that this is wrong ?"—for Hazrah would often argue that God exists in everything and that everybody can attain the knowledge of Brahman by spiritual strivings.

The day has advanced, the bell announcing the offering of noonday meal and waving of lights before the deities has finished ringing. Brahmans, Vaishnavas and the poor are all going towards the guest-house. The *prasadam* of the Mother and Radhakanta will be distributed to them. The devotees also will receive their share in that part of the house where the Brahman officers of the temple take their meals. The Master says : "Have all of you your meal there, will you ? (*To Noren*) Or will you take yours here ? All right, Norendra and myself will take our meal here."

After rest the Master comes and joins in the merriment of the devotees who have been chatting in the northern verandah. It is now past 2 o'clock. All on a sudden Bhavanath makes his appearance in the garb of a Brahmacharin—in *gerua* wear, a *kamandalu* in his hand, and a smile on his lips. The Master and all the devotees burst into laughter.

Sri R. (*smiling*) : "Are not his thoughts such ? So he has attired himself like that."

Narendra : "He is acting the Brahmacharin. Let me act the Vamacharin."

Hazrah : "You are then to take to *Pancha Makara*\* and *chakra* and all that."

At that turn of the conversation the Master shows his disapproval by silence and then makes light of it by

\*The five things denoted by the five words beginning with 'ma':—*Matsya* (fish), *Mangsa* (meat), *Madya* (liquor), *Mudra* (fried grains), *Maithuna* (company of the other sex). The Vamacharins practice sadhanas with the aid of these things. They sit in a circle or *chakra* each with a companion of the other sex by his or her side.

jokes. Suddenly he begins to dance, intoxicated, and sings :

“ Deluded I won't be any more,  
Oh Mother, tho' try Thou mayst,  
For I have the divine vision of  
Thy ruddy feet ! ”

Then the Master says : “ Ah ! How delicious the ‘ Chandi ’ song of Rajnarayan ! Thus they dance and sing ! And there is Nakur Acharya's music too. Oh, what dance, what music ! ”

A *sadhu* who is staying at the Panchavati—a wild-tempered man who curses and abuses one and all—appears in wooden sandals and asks for fire. The Master salutes him with joined palms and remains standing in the same posture till the *sadhu* departs.

After his departure, Bhāvanath says laughingly, “ Oh ! What devotion to the *sadhu* ! ”

*Sri R. (with a smile)* : “ Well, he is Narayana in the *tamasic* aspect. Those who are *tamasic* will have to be pleased in this way,—and he is a *sadhu* ! ”

The “Game of Paradise” is going on. The devotees, including Hazrah, have joined it. The Master stands there and finds that the dice of M. and Kishori have reached the goal. He salutes them and says, “ Blessed are you two brothers ! ” (Aside to M.) “ Do not play any more. ” The Master continues gazing at the spot : Hazrah's die falls into “ Hell ” ; so he says, “ What has happened to Hazrah !—Again ! ” (that is to say, Hazrah's die again falls into “ Hell ”) and so all burst out into a hilarious laughter.

Latu's die directly travels from the square of the “ World ” to that of the “ *Chit* ” (the pure consciousness of God-realization), and so he is jumping in a transport of joy. The Master says, “ See how glad he is ! Without that he would have felt miserable. ” [Aside to the

devotees] "There is a meaning in all these ! Hazrah is very proud that he will be triumphant even in this ; but this also is true of God that He never and nowhere disgraces the deserving : they are ever victorious !"

### III

The Master has seated himself on the small cot in his room. Narendra, Bhavanath, Baburam and M. are sitting on the floor. Narendra raised the topic of the tenets of the *Ghoshpata* and *Panchanam* which the Master takes up and condemns. He says, "They cannot properly practise them and only satisfy their carnal desires under the mask of religion." (To Narendra) "You need not hear all these."

"The same is the case of the *Bhairavas* and *Bhairavis*\* too. When I was at Benares, they took me to a 'Bhairavi circle' where each *Bhairava* sat with a *Bhairavi*. They asked me to drink wine ; but when I said that I could not touch wine, they themselves began to drink and dance, though I had expected they would now engage in *Japam* and meditation. And I feared they might stumble into the Ganges, for the 'circle' sat on the bank.

"They are much respected if a married couple turns *Bhairava* and *Bhairavi*. (To Naren and other devotees) "Do you know what my *bhava* is ? Mine is the filial relation towards God. To look upon the Lord as one's mother is a very pure attitude, it is absolutely devoid of danger. The sisterly attitude also is not bad. But the conjugal relation (*Veera-bhava*) is very difficult.

"Tarak's father used to practise that *bhava* ; very difficult this—one cannot maintain the proper attitude.

"Various are the ways of reaching God and every school of faith is a way ; just as one can arrive at the Kali's temple through different paths. But, then, some

\*The worshippers of Siva and Sakti.

are clean and some dirty ; and it is better to travel along clean ones.

“ Many a philosophy and many a path of realization have I seen, but they no longer interest me. They (their followers) all quarrel with each other. You are my own and no unbecoming element is here : let me tell you—this I have understood finally, that He is the Perfect Whole and I am His part ; He is the Master and I am His servant ; and sometimes, again, I see that He is I and I am He ! ”

The devotees, listen to these his words in silence !

*Bhavanath (humbly)* : “ I feel distressed in mind, if there is any misunderstanding with any one ; for, then, I cannot love all. ”

*Sri R.* : “ At first try to talk to them and make up with them ; if then, you fail, do not bother any more about all these. Take refuge in Him and think of Him ; you need not distress your mind for other people. ”

*Bhavanath* : “ Christ and Sri Chaitanya have enjoined us to love all. ”

*Sri R.* : “ Indeed you must love because there is God in all creatures. But you must make your bow to the wicked from a distance. Chaitanyadeva did you speak of ? Even he shrinks his divine manifestations at the sight of the stranger.

“ At Srivasa’s place, they dragged out his mother-in-law by the hair ! ”

*Bhavanath* : “ It was other people who did it. ”

*Sri R.* : “ But could they have done it without acquiescence on his part ? What can you do, if you cannot secure another’s friendship ? Are you to think of it day and night ? Will you thus squander away the mind which you are to devote to Him ? Thus I say, ‘ Mother ! Narendra, Bhavanath, Rakhal,—none do I want. I want only Thee ! what shall I do with man ? ’

“ ‘ When Mother Chandi will condescend to come to my abode, then many will be the recitations of the

*Chandi*\* and then also the advent of many *Dandins*, *Yogins* and *Jatadharins*†.

“Getting Her I get all ! ‘Rupee is earth and earth is rupee, gold is earth and earth is gold’ saying thus, I gave them up, and threw them into the waters of the Ganges. Then the fear came that Mother Lakshmi‡ might get angry : now that I have spurned Her glory, She might stop my sustenance. Then I said, ‘Mother, I want Thee and nothing else.’ Having Her, I shall have all.”

*Bhavanath* : (laughing) : “This is calculativeness.”

*Sri R.* : (smiling) “Yes, this was so.”

“Once the Lord vouchsafed His vision to a *sadhaka*†† and said, ‘I am much pleased with thy austerities ; ask for a boon’. He replied, ‘Oh Lord, if grant Thou wilt, then grant me this boon that I may eat from the same gold plate with my grand-child.’ This one boon achieved many things ; he had property, son, and grandson.” (All laugh.)

\*A collection of prayers and praises to the Divine Mother.

†*Dandins* are a sect of sannyasins who always carry a staff with them. *Jatadharins* are ascetics who keep long matted hairs and beards.

‡The Divine Mother in Her aspect of the giver of wealth and prosperity.

††One who is engaged in spiritual practices.

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## MESSAGE OF SRI KRISHNA\*

SWAMI VISWANANDA

**O**N going through the pages of the history of the world we come across rises and falls in the march of events, and at the critical junctures we find certain great personalities, extraordinary men rising up, who lead humanity to its destined goal. This is true in the field of politics and more so in the field of religion, and our motherland has been singularly fortunate in having now and then towering personalities who showed to our countrymen the path to light, the path to perfection. The Great Master in whose name we have assembled to-day is one of the greatest of such personalities who appeared in our planet to show mankind the path to perfection—I mean Bhagavan Sri Krishna. We find an unbridgeable gulf between these personalities and ourselves. As Swami Vivekananda has put it, they come like emperors and we come like beggars ; they come to give and we to beg. Men have tried in all ages, in all countries, to approach them, and after all their endeavour and effort, have come to realize that there will be for ever a gulf to separate them. That is why the ordinary man has been forced to ascribe divinity to them. That is the origin, that is the genesis of the conception of Divine Incarnation. We see at every stage, at every step, of our life that we are limited in our capacity and we find that these personalities manifest in their life infinite power and knowledge and that is why I say deliberately that there is a wide gulf between these God-men and ordinary men. The Great Sankaracharya, the Prince of Monists, propounded the doctrine of Mayavada. In his introduction to the commentary on the Gita, he says that though the Lord, the Supreme Being, the Most High, has no necessity of his own for incarnation, still it is seen that for the welfare of mankind He assumes a human body. With you and me it is a matter of compulsion, but with the Lord it is a matter of option and choice. He comes of His own accord for the welfare of mankind. That is the difference between the ordinary man and the Divine Being, the Supreme. So the doctrine of Divine incarnation has been philosophically proved in our Hindu religion, which is the corner-stone of our Hindu

\*Notes of a lecture delivered under the auspices of Sri Ramachandra Bhajan Samaj, Dadar, Bombay, on Sri Krishnajanayanthi day.

Shastras, of our Sanatana Dharma. We believe that He can from the high level come down for the welfare of mankind. This doctrine was faintly believed in even in the age prior to Mahabharatha, but it was reserved for Bhagavan Sri Krishna to declare in clear and unmistakable language this abstruse Truth. Those of you who have read the Gita must have come across the passage : " Whenever there is a decline of religion or virtue and whenever there is an ascendancy of vice, I incarnate myself for the establishment of Dharma, of righteousness and for the destruction of the wicked. " This is the declaration, this is the pronouncement of the Lord Himself and the modern Hindu instinctively believes in the truth of this Divine saying. That is, as I say, the philosophical background of the Divine incarnation. So, we believe that in critical junctures of history the Lord appears to guide mankind to perfection and light and Bhagavan Sri Krishna was one of those greatest personalities who visited this planet of ours.

Now, what was the occasion ? If we believe that He the Lord appears only whenever there is a crisis, whenever there is a universal demand, then what was the occasion for the appearance of Sri Krishna on this earth ? Now, in the age of the Mahabharata, there was a decline of *dharma*. The Kshatriyas, the rulers of society and guardians and protectors of dharma had themselves fallen from it. Their greed, jealousy, haughtiness and rivalry had thrown whole kingdoms into misgovernment and disorder, and had vitiated the whole social fabric. Kamsa, Sisupala and Duryodhana and other powerful kings had inaugurated a reign of terror and tyranny, the reign of might over right and this widespread corruption culminated in the war of Kurukshetra in which almost all the kingdoms of the period were drawn in to take one side or the other. There was felt on all hands the urgent need of a great towering personality who would restore order and peace in the world and reinstate and reinterpret the *dharma*. And, to the call of the universal demand, the Lord, Who is never silent to the prayers of mankind, came down as a human being, as the son of Vasudeva and Devaki.

We read in the Bhagavata that Sri Krishna was born in the prison house. Vasudeva and Devaki were frightened because they knew that the next moment Kamsa would come and kill the child. It was his (Kamsa's) vow, so to speak, to kill their eighth child, for he had heard previously that their eighth child would kill him.

There is a beautiful statement from the lips of Devaki in this connection. She said, "The universe is destroyed at the time of *pralaya* and the whole *jagat* rests in You and to-day You are born out of my womb." He the Lord in Whom the Infinite space exists, how could he come out of the womb of an ordinary woman? So, I say this doctrine of Divine incarnation is a paradox of our Hindu Religion. Yet it is a Truth, it is an absolute Truth that He the Lord comes down for the welfare of mankind.

What was the message which the Bhagavan came to give to the world? I think His legacy, His message to mankind for ever is the Bhagavat Gita, which He gave out to his friend and disciple in the battlefield of Kurukshetra. It is a unique book in the history of human thought. In it we find wonderful truths, philosophical truths of all the religions. I said deliberately "of all the religions," for the Bhagavat Gita is not a book of the Hindus alone. It is the most rational book and is meant for all men of all times.

Now, what is the central doctrine of the Bhagavat Gita? In the beginning of the second chapter you will find that the Lord is rebuking Arjuna for giving way to despondency and for his unsoldierly attitude: "It does not befit you, O Arjuna, to yield to this unmanliness." In the battlefield a Kshatrya should stand up and fight like a soldier. Now you know the history of what happened in the mind of Arjuna in the battlefield. He was a great soldier, a great hero. Indeed he was the greatest soldier of those days and he had come to the battlefield with the determination to fight out the battle of Dharma, of righteousness, with his cousins. But at the last moment, at the eleventh hour, he fails. He throws away his arms and says that he will follow the life of an ascetic, a Brahmin, and is not going to fight. To understand this question we have to go a little deep. There have been men who believe that Arjuna was full of Sattwic feeling, the feeling of an ascetic. He did not want to kill his relations and it was Sri Krishna who was the mischievous man, who instigated him to kill his own kinsmen. \* As I have told you, we have to go a little deep in the matter. Arjuna was a Kshatrya and it was the duty of a Kshatrya to fight in the battlefield. His highest virtue is to die in the battlefield or to come out a victor. But at this moment Arjuna sees his own relations and says he is not going to kill them. He was overpowered by

feelings of grief and fear and these are just the opposite of Sattwic virtues. So the Lord had to point out the duty. He said, "It is better to die in the battlefield following your own *Swadharma*, your own duties, than to follow the life of an ascetic." That is the problem of problems. Sometimes, we feel in our lives that we are growing religious, but the next moment all our Rajasic tendencies, all our evil propensities and passions assert themselves. We shall be running a risk in spiritual life if we ignore this fact in our lives and follow the life of an ascetic. He was a Kshatriya out and out. That is why the Lord pointed out to him his duty, his Dharma. That is what the Lord did. He never instigated Arjuna to kill his relations.

One thing we find here. The Lord points out to Arjuna his glory, his power. That is, I think, in short, the message of the Bhagavat Gita. The Lord points out to you and me our Divine origin, the Divinity that is in you and in me. He says :—"O Man, do not yield to this unmanliness. Do not yield to the passions and propensities. It does not befit thee, because you are part and parcel of My being. You are full of purity, full of love, why then yield to passions and propensities?" Thus through Arjuna the Lord has given His message to the whole world, to remind us of our Divine origin, our omnipotence, our power and glory. Is it not true?

"I am God. I am not an ordinary man. Why should I yield to grief and sorrow? I am that Bliss Infinite. I am ever pure. I am ever free." That is what a Rishi felt in the Vedic Age. This is the Divine nature of Man. So, the Lord pointed out to Arjuna his Divine glory, his power and omnipotence and through Arjuna he has given this message to the world.

Another thing we find throughout the Gita. The Lord says work, work, work. What are you to learn from it? Are we to work like cart-horses and die in harness? Is it then the central teaching of the Gita? To this the answer is "No" and "Yes." It is true as well as false. The Lord says that you must work, you must do your duties and it is only by doing your work, by doing your prescribed duty, that you become fit for the higher path of Jnana. The path of wisdom is the superior path, but unless and until you have purified yourself by following the path of Karma, work, you cannot be fit for that. That is why the Lord says you must work, work, work. And in what way you should work? The whole world does

work. Every man in the steet does work, but he is not a Karma Yogi who hankers after the fruits of his work. But he who gives up the fruits of actions and surrenders himself to the Lord is a real Karma Yogi. Such a man is like a lotus leaf. A lotus leaf grows in water, lives in water, but is never tainted by water. That is the distinctive feature of a Karma Yogi. He will do his work, his duties, but will never be tainted. He has known the secret of human life. It is this : Do not give your love to anything finite. Do not give the love of your heart to any man or woman, for what is the use of bestowing your love on a being who is going to die ? So, the Lord says, " Give your heart, all your love, to Me, because I am the only Eternal Being in this world in the midst of these shadows. " That is the teaching, that is the keynote of the Bhagavat Gita. Give your love to the Lord. Do work with your hands to live in the world, there is no harm. But give your mind to Him. That is what the Bhagavan says in the Gita.

There is yet another feature of this marvellous book. It is the note of harmony, of synthesis. There was rivalry since the Vedic Age between the followers of the two paths of Jnana and Karma. The former (the followers of the path of Jnana or Sankhya) maintained that one must renounce all work and then only he could expect to have salvation or Mukti. The latter (the followers of the path of Karma) on the other hand, held that one could not renounce work and that one must do work to the end of his life. There was always conflict between these two sects and Bhagavan Sri Krishna was the first to reconcile these warring sects. He says in the Gita :

" Children, not the wise, speak of knowledge and performance of action as distinct. He who truly lives in one, gains the fruits of both. "

The paths of Sankhya and Karma are different but the goal they aim at is one and the same and it is only the method that differs. Where, then, is the necessity for quarrel ? Not only that, the Lord goes on a step further and says :

" Whatever path a man may choose according to his own inclination and inborn tendencies, I reveal myself through that path. "

I think that in the whole range of the ancient Sanskrit literature we do not find any other passage like this. Once for all the Lord silences jealousy and rivalry in religious life.

If the conception of the Fatherhood of God appeals to you, you are free to choose that path. If it is the Motherhood of God that appeals to you, you can choose that path. If the idea of Jesus Christ as the saviour of my life appeals to me, I may follow that and you may believe in Sri Krishna or Sankara as the saviour of your life. That is the note of harmony, of synthesis. There should be no quarrel and fight among the followers of different religions. That is the problem of problems to-day in the world. We Hindus are fighting with Mahomedans, and Hindus and Mahomedans both are fighting with the Christians. Why do you fight over names and forms since what you worship is one and the same? That is the message of Bhagavan Sri Krishna. This message of harmony we find even in the Vedas. In the Rig Veda we come across the passage :

“He the Lord is One, Truth is One, but the Wise call Him by various names.”

It was only a faint voice in the Vedas but it was reserved for Sri Krishna to proclaim to the world in a thundering voice the same truth in the Gita. Do not, therefore, quarrel with anybody over names and forms, because it is the same God Who is under different names and forms worshipped by followers of different religions. This is in short the message of the Bhagavat Gita and the message of the Bhagavat Gita is the message of Bhagavan Sri Krishna to mankind. In his own life we find the wonderful harmony of these different paths. He Himself was the concrete illustration of the Eternal Truth He had preached. As Swami Vivekananda used to say, He was the most perfect Man, He the Man of the Gita, the Man of Brindavan, the Man of the Vedas. In Him we find the Highest Wisdom. And, who was a greater Karma Yogi than Sri Krishna? He was a Yogin of Yogins.

The last scene in the drama of the life of Sri Krishna is the fulfilment of the teachings of the Bhagavat Gita.

[Here the Swamiji narrated briefly the story of the destruction of the Yadava race as being caused by the fruits of their own actions and the story of the Vyadha—how a group of playful Yadavas dressed one of the sons of Sri Krishna to have the appearance of a woman, how they asked certain Rishis who were passing by what that boy-woman would bear, how the Rishis cursed them that she would bring forth an iron rod which would cause the entire elimination of the Yadava clan from the face of the earth, how when actually the iron rod was born, the Yadavas powdered it (leaving a very insignificant piece unpowdered)]

and threw it in the ocean lest the Rishis' words would come to fruition, how in spite of this precautionary measure, the powder was dashed against the shores and grew into strong sharp grass with which the drunken Yadavas fought one day among themselves and died and lastly how a hunter, who happened to get the small piece left of the said iron rod while once fishing and had henceforth been using it as an arrow, aimed at the lotus foot of the Bhagavan when the latter was sitting on a tree in Dhyana trying to cast away the mortal vesture—the hunter thinking that the Lord's foot was a beautiful small bird—which caused the passing away of the Lord.]

Do you know when the hunter approached the Bhagavan to be excused for his ignorant action, what the Lord said? He said : " No, you have not done anything to me. You have only killed the body and have fulfilled the prophecy of the Rishis. " For, do you know what the Rishi said when he was asked what would come out of that boy-woman's womb ? It is the Law of Karma that He gave to the world and you see it fulfilled in His own life.

You would see also his non-attachment. He had so many sons and grandsons and it would seem that He was very much attached to them. But at the last moment He showed that they did not belong to Him. That is why Swami Vivekananda once said that, compared with the life of the Bhagavan, the renunciation of Buddha appeared to be weakness. Why do you run away from the world ? This world itself is a temple of God if you have the eyes to see. If you have the will you can achieve that which the ascetic tries to achieve in the cave or in the forest. That is the one thing in the Bhagavat Gita. No work is mean, no work is too low. Everything you do is sacred if you have eyes to see. No work is too low for the Lord. The Lord is not pleased by your status and position in the society. If a king who sits on the throne cannot properly manage the State affairs and a cobbler can mend his shoes well, can do his duty properly, that cobbler is nobler in the eyes of God. We ignorant men of the world judge the position of man by his status in the society. But what is after all the status of a man when that man dies ? The emperor and the butcher are all taken to the cremation ground and what remains is only a heap of ashes and nothing more. So in the eyes of God there is no difference between one work and another but it only depends on the spirit in which it is done. We read in the Mahabharatha the life of the butcher who was a great Jnani.

So the central teaching of the Bhagavat Gita is, you must do your duties, but you must not give your mind, your heart to anybody except the Lord—you must do the duties in a spirit of renunciation—so that at the last moment of your life you can remember Him. The Bhagavan says in the Gita that the man who remembers Him at the time of his death, at the last moment of his life, that man will attain Him. A Hindu's life is guided by that principle. He is to get up from the bed with the name of God on his lips and is to retire to bed with His name. There is an element of truth in this. Such a person can think of God at the time of his *prayana*. Everybody will die. Even the Great Napoleon had to die and all of us have to die one day. So we should be all prepared for it.

May Lord Sri Krishna in Whose name we have assembled here to-day enlighten us and guide us at the last moment of death to Eternal Bliss !

*Om !      Shanti !      Shanti !      Shanti !*

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## BHIKSHATANAMURTHI, OR SIVA AS MENDICANT

ARCOT SWAMINATHA AIYAR, AVL., B. A.

**T**HOUGH the external history of India has changed considerably through the ages, it may be truly asserted, that there has been no great change in its inner spiritual nature. The Hindu Dharma, as viewed with reference to the true interests of humanity and the great problems of ethics and philosophy, has not been superseded and to this day Indian thought as a chapter in the history of the human mind continues to be of significance to us and throughout its long history the spiritual background which is India's valued heritage has been continually in evidence. This in no small measure is due to the national trait of India which has always had a reverence for the past. When confronted with new thought and cultures this national trait of the Indian came to his aid and with a genius all his own, he wove into the old fabric as much of the new thought as possible. This conservative-liberalism of the Indian mind has been of considerable help in tracing the successive stages of Hindu religious thoughts.

One of the most interesting chapters in the religious history of India is that relating to Siva, one of the Hindu Trinity. In the Rig Veda, the word *Siva*, meaning the auspicious, occurs as an epithet of *Rudra*. Vishnu as Narayana emerges in the Yajur Veda in which Rudra is often represented as a malevolent deity causing death and disease among men and cattle. In the Puranic period also, Rudra retains His attribute as the destroyer and the terrific. He carries a discus, a trident, a club, an axe, and a sword ; He wears a girdle of serpents and a *yagnopavita* of serpents. He laughs, sings and dances in ecstasy and dwells with the daughters and wives of Rishis. He has erect hair, looks obscure in His nakedness and has an excited look. He has matted locks, frequents cemeteries and performs awful rites. Such descriptions form the basis of several Puranic legends regarding Siva, Who was identified with the Rudra of the Vedic hymns.

In the post-Vedic period, Siva-Rudra had already obtained a place in the Hindu Trinity and is seen to claim superiority over Brahma and Vishnu and even to assume the status of Mahadeva (Supreme Lord). We learn from the

Linga, Kurma and Vayu Puranas that once upon a time when Vishnu was seen at the end of a Kalpa in the deep abyss of waters, a great illumination appeared before Him and from it emerged Brahma. Brahma approached Vishnu and introduced Himself as the Creator of the Universe and demanded of Vishnu who He was, to which Vishnu replied that He also was the architect of the universe. A quarrel ensued between them and just then there appeared a Linga resembling the great cosmic fire with thousands of tongues of flames blazing out. Brahma set out to find the top and Vishnu the bottom of this column of fire. Having failed in their attempt, they finally came to realise that there was something far greater than themselves, and having approached the column of fire, they began to sing its praises.

Pleased with their prayers, Siva manifested Himself in the body of the fiery Linga with a thousand arms and legs, bearing the *pinaka*, clad in the hide of an elephant, carrying the *tri-sula* and wearing the *yagnopavita* of snakes and addressed Brahma and Vishnu as follows :

" You both are born from Me, Brahma from my right loin and Vishnu from My left loin ; all three of us are really one but are now separated into the three aspects Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara. Brahma will in future be born of Vishnu and at the beginning of a Kalpa, I Myself will be born from the angry brow of Vishnu. "

This story of Lingotbhava introduces us to *Bhikshatana-murthi* or its variant *Kankalamurthi*. The superiority of Rudra-Siva in the Hindu Trinity and His claim to the status of Mahadeva continued to be questioned by Brahma. Incensed with anger, Siva, in the aspect of Bhairava, cut off one of the heads of Brahma who suffered temporary death. He soon revived by the power of his austerities and accepted the superiority of Siva. However, the sin of having killed Brahma—Brahmahatya—possessed Bhairava who requested Brahma to suggest to him some penance by which he could expiate his sin. Brahma advised him to beg food in the skull of the head cut off by him till he met Vishnu who would devise means for wiping off the sin. Bhairava (Siva), surrounded by a host of bhutas (goblins) went from place to place begging for food. Finally he reached the abode of Vishnu. Having been prevented by Vishvakshena from entering, a fight ensued in which Vishvakshena was killed. Bhairava fixing the dead body of Vishvakshena on his trident appeared

Before Vishnu and begged for food. Vishnu cut open an artery in the forehead of Bhairava, and said that the blood which flowed from it was the fittest food for him. Being requested by Bhairava to advise him as to the best means of washing off his sin, Vishnu advised Bhairava to go to the sacred shrine of Varanasi (Kasi). Dancing with joy, he wended his way thither and when he reached Kasi, his sin left him, the skull of Brahma and the dead body of Vishvakṣena having dropped off simultaneously. And Siva once again became Mahadeva. Such in short is the account we meet with in the Kurma Purana regarding Siva bearing the skull of Brahma and the dry bones (kankala) of Vishvakṣena and also regarding his begging expedition.

We need not pause here to consider the confusion in the Puranic stories about Siva and Bhairava, an aspect of Siva. Further, we find the sin of killing Vishvakṣena is laid upon the shoulders of Siva which were already groaning under that of cutting off the head of Brahma.

The Linga Purana gives a slightly different account of the begging expedition of Siva and this shows why as Bhikṣhānāmurti or Kankālamurti, Siva is seen stark naked when going out for begging. Once upon a time in the forest of Darukavana even women and children took to the performance of austerities and forgot the worldly ways of living (*Pravṛtti mārga*). To make them realise the need of observing worldly ways also, Siva started out to beg in their quarters, assuming a beautiful naked form to test the fidelity of the women who were proud of their chastity. At the same time, Vishnu is said to have taken the form of *Mohini* in order to tempt the sages who were also performing *tapas* in the forests. The women and the Rishis lapsed into all the bad ways of the world and we learn from the Puranic story that they were finally taught the lesson, which they so much needed.

The Puranic stories regarding the begging expedition of Siva are evidently founded on the early Dharma Sastras, which laid down that if a Brahman killed another of great learning and character, the sin could be expiated by following rigidly the course of conduct prescribed therein.

The sinner should, with his own hands, erect for himself a hut in the forest, hoist on the top of it the head of the man he killed and live in the hut wearing as his upper garment the

hide of a horse or an ass, the hairy side of it exposed. He should carry a skull in one hand as his begging bowl and one of the long bones of the hand (*khatwanga*) of the deceased as a stick. He should go out begging for food, saying, "Who is there who would feed the murderer of a Brahmana?" He should not visit more than seven houses for making his living and should take his food and drink in the skull while walking in the public way. If he meets an Arya on the road, he should move like a pig to the edge of the road leaving the way for the Arya to pass.

Bhikshatanamurthi or Kankalamurthi is one of the common Icons in Southern India and as important as *Natarajamurthi*, the dancing Siva.

The bronzes and sculptures we meet with in South Indian temples are symbolical representations of the Puranic stories regarding these aspects of Siva. With the advance of religious-philosophic thought, interpretations in keeping with it, have been given to Icons. Accordingly we find that the Puranic stories regarding the dance of Siva (*Natarajamurthi*) or Siva as mendicant *Bhikshatanamurthi* have come to bear an esoteric significance and have profoundly affected the religious and philosophic literature of South India. The beatific vision of the Divine Dancer *par excellance* (*Nataraja*) have been glorified in beautiful soul-stirring songs and prominent among such rhapsodists figure the great Nayanars, Gnana Sambandar, Sundarar, Appar and Manikka Vachakar. We are familiar with Dr. Ananda Coomaraswami's monumental contributions to this subject.

Even European critics of Indian art have not been behind in their appreciation of the inner significance of the Divine Dance. In his latest monograph entitled 'The Himalayas in Indian Art,' Mr. E. V. Havell thus traces the conception of Siva-Nataraja Icon to its natural sources:—"Of all the impressions which the pilgrims to the sacred shrines along the Western Ghats carried home with them, the most vivid must have been the gorgeous spectacle of the sun in its descent towards the ocean illuminating tier after tier of the rocky precipices and the forest clad ravines with its slanting rays of crimson and burnished gold until at the time of the evening prayer (*Sandhya*) it touched the far off sea-horizon and began the sacred dance in response to the time beats of the waves—the dance of the cosmic rhythm, which all the Rishis and all the Devas knew. In fair weather, it was only a gentle

swaying movement like the fluttering of the falling leaves in the forest of a still autumn evening for Siva then only manifested His beningn aspect. But when the setting sun flashed fierce red rays through banks of purple cloud and Siva's mighty drum began its thundering beat along the shore, while long, snake-like rollers showed their glittering teeth, the great god revealed Himself in His tremendous world-shaking dance, the *thandavam*, which summed up the threefold processes of nature, creation, preservation and destruction,—and we be-tide the unhappy warrior who was whirled within the orbit of that awful dance. Such was the constant mental stimulus which the Brahman at his evening meditation on the Western Ghats received from the wonderful nature he saw around him, until the sacred drum with the ritual with which he responded to the prompting of the spiritual self became interwoven with his philosophy and took up a permanent place among the temple Icons of Deccan and Southern India, the natural imagery being translated into metaphysical concept, for the Brahmin, like the platonic philosopher, used the duties of earth as steps by which he climbed upwards to the higher planes of thought."

Equally significant is the Icon of *Bhikshatanamurthi* or *Kankalamurthi*. A detailed description of the icons is inappropriate to a magazine article, but suffice it to say that the skull which the Murthi holds is that of Brahma and *kankala* which he carries is that of Vishnu or an aspect of Vishnu. I see in this the fulfillment of the Puranic story of Lingothbhava, that Brahma, Vishnu and Siva are really one, performing in co-operation with each other, in cosmic evolution, the work of Narayana-Mahadeva—as summed up in the three processes of creation, preservation and destruction. Siva, in bearing the skull of Brahma and *kankala* of Vishnu appears to be withdrawing unto himself as Iswara the creative and the sustaining processes before the end of a Kalpa and the beginning of a new Kalpa. Much space will be required to elaborate this idea and I should like to leave the subject here for the present.

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## INDIA AND THE AWAKENING OF THE EAST

N. KASTURI, B. A. (HONS.), B. L.

THE most outstanding event of the post-War world has been the awakening of the East into an aggressive recognition of its position and privileges. Asia resents "the actual atrophy of to-day and the possible extinction of to-morrow." If the Russo-Japanese War laid the foundations of this re-vitalising movement, the Great War increased its pace a thousandfold and opened the eyes of all the peoples of the East to the immense possibilities of their own selves. It may be called wounded pride, unrest, sense of nationalism, sedition or ambition, but the driving power has everywhere been the same. The Islamic world has felt the impulse as much as the Hindu and the Buddhist. The "Yellow Peril" has fast become "the rising tide of colour." Japan and China, Persia and Egypt, Arabia and Syria, all have become young again and protesting against what Tagore calls "the wriggling tentacles of cold-blooded utilitarianism with which the West has grasped all the easily yielding succulent portions of the East."

There is to be found a great parallelism between this Revolt of the East and the Revolt of women—the two great problems of the XX century. In both cases, there has been a foolish betrayal of the fundamental birth right, and a slavish imitation of function and activity without regard to the genius of the race. The national ideals of the East have been lowered in order to cater for inter-national respect ; armaments have been multiplied to win a seat in the councils of Eur-America ; capitalism and imperialism have been adopted with as much ease and satisfaction as cigarettes and top-hats. Nothing has been gained by the contact except dead machinery, railways, ships, beer-bottles and guns, for nothing else has been sought for. Where spiritual peace once prevailed, the chaotic claims of hurlyburly existence have been enthroned. "The way of peace they know not and there is no judgment in their goings; they have made them crooked paths ; whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace."

Applying the warning uttered by such a sympathetic student of India as Havell, generally to Indian conditions, we can say

Asia "now stands at the parting of the ways ; it is for her leaders to say which they will choose. The one is to surrender all her intellectual freedom and in the blind lust for commercial wealth and political powers . . . . . to follow the ignoble crowd which has gone before down the same path, every man fighting for himself, struggling to act up the vanguard and hoping sooner or later, amidst unspeakable filth, squalor and misery to join in the reckless scramble for gold such as is witnessed to-day in the great commercial cities of Europe and the so-called ' free ' America . . . . . "

" The other path is to keep steadfastly in the direction which India's (and Asia's) own spiritual teachers have always pointed out, cherishing the great artistic traditions committed to your charge as a most sacred trust and, if you must look to the West for more light and leading to use the insight of spiritual intuition to discriminate between falsehood and truth, to know wisdom from ignorance."

It is, therefore, profoundly significant that all the founders of Modern India under the lead of Swami Vivekananda have been inspired with " the basic truth which it has been given her to utter, the truth of the unity of all things in the Divine mind,"—a doctrine of universal peace and harmony, a basis for cultural growth and the true communion of races and civilisations. The Asian Renaissance has meant in India not the meaningless multiplication of materials, not merely the extended use of Western tools and machinery, but a rediscovery of her own spiritual moorings.

This fact is of immense value for all Asia, since in this continent " all roads lead to India, or rather, all roads lead from India." She has ever been the leader of the Holy Alliance of the East, and she has not lost sight of a constructive ideal, a positive plan without which the awakening is but the mad man's rising in sleep. Probably even in India, the foreign observer is able to note only the clouds of political warfare or the din of social upheavals. He might note a counter-reformation in art and literature and the beginnings of a counter-revolution even in industry. But the springs of the new life thus visible in leaf and bud are really far deeper, in the inner consciousness which has begun to be fertilised by the age-old truths of the sages. The sustenance for every forward step has come from the realm of the spirit.

For true nation building, the soul is the surest foundation. Not in hatred or blind veneration, nor through vengeance or

imitation can the freedom of Asia be won. It must be realised not extracted ; assimilated, not adopted -, felt , not received. Hence the message which the sages of Modern India proclaim to her sorrowing sisters of the East is the message of the Bhagavadgita itself : " Better one's own Dharma than that of another however exalted." Or as Swami Vivekananda said " when India becomes English, she dies." When Asia becomes the ' East End ' of Europe, she dies. The more we depend for support from without, the greater we become non-self-supporting from within. A strong and self-respecting soul is verily the most stubborn armour yet invented and contentment and inward peace, the truest happiness of man.

This is the message full of hope and strength which India has given to Asia many a time. The royal welcome with which Rabindranath Tagore was received everywhere in China and in the war-weary tracts of Europe reminds one of the earlier and equally magnificent triumphs of all those who carried the healing balm of Indian thought, the ancient message of Shanti. To-day, " hundreds of millions of people are without a settled state—sheep without a shepherd, men without a master to guide their confused and disordered lives through the chaos and the darkness. " Once more, the elevating ideals of Indian leaders and of patriots like Okakura and Noguchi, Sen and Zaghul, who have all been working with their fingers on the pulse of India, are being studied by Chinaman and Egyptian. Her experiments in a discriminating and energising nationalism should guide the Asian Revolution along permanent lines of progress.

Of course, the physician must first heal himself and India must keep her wonderfully noble ideals of Swadharma and Satya undefiled by compromise. The fundamental belief of the Indian in the unconquerableness of the soul must be upheld at all costs and the larger vision of a world where each creature from Brahma down to the blade of grass is but a manifestation of the one kept as a beacon-light to save us from the bogs of hatred. India must liberate individuals from hampering institutions that dwarf man. The tears of the depressed classes, shunned with cruel care, have been corroding into her society for ages.

In other words, the Renaissance in India must widen and deepen, vitalising the springs of every art, quickening every creative impulse thus lifting a despised people to emerge from inertness and ignorance. We must give up jealously and all

other symptoms of psychological degeneracy. Literature has yet a wide field in arousing the race-consciousness to a realisation of the true needs of the hour. For example, where is the story in vernacular literatures of India to-day that can awaken the minds of men to our grievous social wrongs, like *Les Miserables* of France, *Oliver Twist* of England or *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in America ? The theatre in India is fast becoming a vehicle for pandering to the tastes of morbid sensualism. It has degraded itself into a complex of clap trap and febrile nightmares instead of educating and enlivening public opinion so that those who came to laugh, remained to pray ! Observe too how the recent Russian stage holds out before the masses the basic verities of Life and Death in all their awful reality so that the race could never forget the inherent vanity of the world or the powerlessness of Man before a Higher Destiny. Such a drama is "The Life of Man" by Leonid Andrew, the most brilliant expounder of modern Russian thought. Of course, an Indian Andrew can never write a drama or story without saturating it with the supremest hopes for man and without thereby, preparing for an Indian Renaissance, much more permanent and progressive than the Russian. Indians too should write and act such awakening stories of primal truths. In short, we must rise from the sleep of centuries healthier and more refreshed and abler to meet life's fiery ordeals with bared brows. What the Swami Vivekananda called "creeping mysticisms" must be banished from every aspect of our culture. We must learn the glory of rising above the morass of life and grappling with the Gods. Once more should rise from every Indian heart the prayer of the Upanishads "from the unreal, lead me to the real, from darkness lead me unto light, from death lead me unto immortality."

In, conclusion, If India must take her legitimate place in the vanguard of this intellectual and moral rally of the Asian peoples, the inexhaustible genius for struggling with the tempestuous Soul to realise inward Peace which lies dormant in every one of us, beneath heavy layers of agelong stagnation and apathy must be awakened and vitalised.

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## A WESTERN REVELATION OF THE SOUL OF INDIA

K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRI, B. A., B. L.

*(Continued from page 270)*

**I**T is indeed unfortunate that with so much beauty about us our tastes to-day are so ugly and idiotic, thanks to our modern education and snobbishness. The author says in terms of deserved castigation : "The modern middle-class Indian, with his mad straining after Englishness, usually prefers, sad to say, a hideous Brussels carpet with bunches of green roses on it to the subtly blended, intricate patterns of the ancient Eastern loom, a cheap gramophone to the sweet-toned native musical instruments, and a weird mixture of English and Indian garments to the clothes, graceful in form and exquisite in texture and colouring, that contented his grandfather. It is strange that Indians, with their natural strong artistic sense, their faultless eye for colour and form, should, directly they essay the deep waters of Western culture, sink to the level of a seaside landlady. I remember the first time I visited the house of a rich Indian—a pretty place enough—my surprise at the interior. I had vaguely expected to find something of Arabian Nights' splendour, and instead beheld everywhere atrocious knickknacks of the worst lodginghouse type, plus mats, ornate looking-glasses and bead curtains.....In the same way the most dignified Indian will often look positively a bounder—anyhow unattractive when he dons the drab and stuffy garments of Western manhood." What a fall is here ! Yet modern Indians, not content with making bounders of themselves, desire to lay violent hands on the graceful costumes of their ladies and children. I have seen young Indian girls dressed up in the unlovely frocks of their English sisters, and their father gazing on such dress in ill-concealed admiration. What blindness ! What about the beautiful industrial arts of India which we are killing by neglect and replacing by foreign rubbish equally devoid of beauty and durability ? The author speaks of "Old brass, perfect in proportion and of loving workmanship, shawls into which a human lifetime of joys and hopes and fears has been worked, ivory carved with unbelievable intricacies." She says : "At any rate there is considerably more original and artistic handwork to be seen in India than in present-day England.....The glories of Kashmiri embroidery alone are sufficient to inspire a poet. India, Persia, and China are the treasure stores of design for the whole world, and nowhere are the designs more graceful and lovely than in the work of the Kashmiris.....India has always been a land of beautiful craft. The process of chintz printing was invented there, and the art of dyeing practised long before it was known in ancient Egypt." Yet modern Indians have no eyes for all this beauty showered by the lavish hand of the Past at their scornful feet.

I have reserved to the last Miss Wingfield-Startford's pen-picture of the Indian woman, as Indian womanhood is the finest blossom of the Indian character, as it combines the purity and sublimity of the

Himalaya and the loveliest and grace of the Taj Mahal, and as it is the finest work of God's art. She says : " Indian women, with their almost impossibly high ideals of life and conduct and their secluded, contemplative lives, are truly the guardians of the national faith priestesses almost, by training and choice. Indeed the life of an orthodox lady of the old school is almost of asceticism. Vowed to utter and unquestioning devotion to husband and children, careful of the multitude of religious observances that fall due throughout the day, worshipping, meditating, attending to the welfare of every member of the household, ever patient, forethoughtful, self-effacing. And all this not with any thought of merit, but as the veriest matter of course. The Hindu woman keeps herself holy, and does really live up to a standard that would be thought quite unattainable, even if desirable, by her Western sisters. The whole aim of her training is the utter negation of selfish desire, the glad sacrificing of herself for her husband, children and dependents, and a stainless faithfulness in thought, word, and deed, to one man. The orthodox Hindu girl of the upper classes does not even see her husband before her marriage, and presumably he must often turn out to be woefully inferior to the lover of her dreams. Yet, once married, she worships him almost as a god, bestowing on him a wealth of loyal, tender, unselfish devotion such as is all too rarely seen as a sequel to the ' love marriages ' of the West." Yet the ignorant and insolent modern Indian manhood—manly in its attitude to women, rather than in its attitude to foreigners—wants to overturn all these graces and sanctities of Indian womanhood. The purdah system is an excrescence in India, and a defence of the ancient ideals of Indian womanhood does not mean a glorification of the purdah. Sita, Savitri, Damayanti and other heroines of India never hid themselves behind purdahs but they would not and did not sacrifice modesty and refinement and chastity and sanctity at the altar of personal pleasure. The author says : " True devotion and asceticism never go unhonoured in India, and the austerities and deeds of mercy of the widow are looked upon as reflecting a credit on the house which she inhabits. It is not generally recognised by English people with what intensity an Indian woman feels, when her husband has gone, that half of herself has died too, that the pleasures of this world are over for her and her life must from henceforth be to all intents and purposes that of a nun. . . . . There is one key to much that is strange to English understandings about the position of women in India. All is made clear once it is realized that their disabilities, even, are largely the outcome of that practical idealism that is so strong a national characteristic. . . . . The idea that such an irrelevant occurrence as death could cut short the love and loyalty of a good wife for her husband is incredible to a Hindu woman, and, since she is no longer allowed to follow his body to the funeral pyre as of old—thereby to ensure paradise for him and for herself a thousand years of bliss at his side—she looks upon herself as indeed dead to the world—an empty shell of a woman who must live only for service to God and to those around her." She says further : " It is a significant fact that, whereas to us romance is chiefly concerned with the affairs of young lovers, Indian poetry deals almost entirely with love and constancy of husband and wife." About Indian chivalry she says : ' He is no less truly chivalrous than the Englishman in his

intent. As Lakshman recognized among the jewels of his sister-in-law Sita only her anklets, so even to-day an Indian will seldom look at the face of a woman he meets in the street. . . . . Indeed a woman, even a white woman, is safer alone in an Indian city than she would be in the East End of London." Sir Andrew Fraser says : " For a good woman, whether European or Indian, they have a chivalrous respect and admiration." Indian womanhood must keep its modesty and purity and refinement and sanctity inviolate while widening its intellectual horizon and taking its proper place in the national life.

Such is the author's true and beautiful revelation of the soul of India. She says : " India has strangely absorbent powers over those who dwell in her shadow, and there is something in her spaciousness and peace that tranquillise the most turbulent spirit." Will she be able to tranquillise and refine the turbulent western spirit and at the same time retain her own refinement and calm of soul and prevent her own children from suicidal westernisation ? Sir M. Visweswarayya in his book *Reconstructing India* pines for the Utopian day when the Indian peasant will " eat his food not from leaves or earthen vessels but from plates of porcelain, brass or copper." About this Miss Wingfield Stratford says : " To eat one's meals off a leaf, which can be destroyed afterwards, is sanitary, labour-saving, economical and finally, natural. . . . . It is perfectly possible to be civilized, without eating off plates, whether of porcelain, brass or copper. Neither is there any reason why, because we choose to spoil the natural shape of our feet by wearing heavy uncomfortable boots, Indians should go and do likewise." When shall we get over this craze for absurd Westernisation ? In respect of science, industry, commerce and administration, we must borrow from the West and make the borrowing our own. England which has gladly given self-government to Canada and Australia must give it to India also if her talk about the British Commonwealth of Nations is not sheer hypocrisy. But outside the above limited province of science, industry, commerce and administration, India must preserve her Indianness with a jealous and vigilant and defensive love. Why should we lose our simplicity and spirituality and peace and calm and leisure of life simply because a European or an Europeanised Indian bids us do so in the name of a so-called higher standard of civilised life ? The author rightly points out : " We might indeed, go so far as to say that what England is suffering from to-day is an excess of artificially stimulated needs which has outstripped the rate of production." Why should we seek and welcome all " the miseries and complications that have followed upon the super-civilisation of the West ?" She says : " Our East End children, living in the midst of acres of drab and sordid streets, breathing in smoke-poisoned air, stunted in mind as well as body, with nothing that is not mean, tawdry and vulgar within their physical, mental or spiritual vision, are less well off even than the children of the needy Indian peasant, who at least have sunshine and pure air, space and all the gifts of nature, and usually mothers who have leisure to give some attention to them instead of the poor, harassed, blowsy termagant so often seen in our own country. Even if Indian village children have not the advantage of an English board school, they learn strange things of the gods and heroes of old, of the ways of the gods

and the doctrine of Karma, and are instructed in faith, reverence and devotion. The mystery-plays of the Indian village are surely not less elevating than the local cinema, and, however inconvenient it may be to have to fall back in your old age upon the charity of your great nephew or even a third cousin once removed, it must be much worse to go and live in a gaunt, barrack-like building known as a Guardians' Institute, where paupers are fed, dressed, put to bed, and allowed to go out, all by official routine, where husband and wife are separated in their old age, and where monotonous, penitential confinement—and a death in life—is dragged through until the end comes in an unmarked, ungrieved pauper's grave." When shall we learn to understand and achieve the true Indianness of India ? When shall we learn to remove our outer poverty without losing our inner wealth ? Let every son and daughter of India read and realise the above revelation of the soul of India, and help to create the true, great, bright, prosperous, pure and holy India of the future.

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## EDITORIAL NOTES

**I**N reference to the reformation of the Hindu society Swami Vivekananda designated his method as root-and-branch reform. As a seer and prophet of the modern age he could not help seeing that a wholesale reformation is necessary to cast off many a dried branch that is still sticking to the main trunk as a burden and without any purpose to serve. But like all prophets, he came to fulfil and not to destroy. So his method was not marked by any of the violent processes of revolution, but it always sought to kindle the inner consciousness of truth in man and thereby change the entire outlook of life.

It is a fact well known to all historians that revolution, be it bloody or bloodless, must be preceded by the propagation of the gospel or the central philosophy which is behind the revolution, and the revolution becomes successful to the degree the popular mind is imbued with the philosophy. So, for the successful issue of a revolution a body of thinkers, quite saturated with its philosophy, should always be at the background, or we should say, near the very soul of the movement, who should form its moving force.

It is a fond dream of all true lovers of India that her future should be a harmonious combination of the spiritual wealth of her past with a degree of material prosperity and political freedom. To put it in other words, that the splendour of her spiritual soul should shine in an unshackled, healthy physical body is the aim and ideal of all our national movements. But the difficulty arises in the adoption of the means and methods, and the laying of emphasis upon certain items of the means for the realization of the goal. From that arises unfortunately all the differences between one movement and another and even among the members of the same movement. It is plain that for the full realization of our national ideal two things are absolutely necessary. On the one hand we have to maintain the ancient spiritual culture of this land in its untarnished pristine purity, and on the other hand, we have to increase our national efficiency in the physical plane by adopting all those means that the modern science has offered us. We shall examine one of these two aspects of the national problem in this issue.

Perhaps we need not reiterate to the readers of this magazine the seer-like assertion of Swami Vivekananda that the soul of India is spirituality, *Adhyatma-vidya*, and any deterioration of that soul would really mean the national death. And her national awakening must necessarily mean the revival of this spiritual culture and soul-consciousness of this land. It is an unfortunate sign of the time that all the movements in India are gravitating towards politics, that the best brains of the land are drawn to the political field, and that there is a constant tendency to mix up political issues with every other activity of the land. Even the Hindu Mahasabha, with its avowed purpose of religious and social regeneration of the Hindus, is often dragged down for political ends ; at least some of its stalwart workers often attempt to make use of its platforms for the propagation of political gospel, although its President, Lala Lajpat Rai, has openly declared that the Hindu Mahasabha must keep itself completely separate from politics. We sincerely believe that it is a sign of cultural degeneracy of the land that its best thinkers and men of action should be attracted to politics instead of spirituality. Whatever might be the excuse or apology of our politically minded compatriots for such tendencies of theirs, it is plain that this order of things has been brought about partially by the impingement of the Western ideals of life on our own mind and partly by the system of foreign government existing in this land. But we must assert that this sort of mentality is anything but *national*, that is, it is not in keeping with the genius and ideal of the nation. We do not contend for a second that for the healthy upkeep of a nation its political, economical and other institutions are not necessary, but what we say is that they must be given a place subservient to culture and spirituality in this land.

Now it is agreed on all hands that the spiritual culture of the land must be kept up. India needs the very best of her sons to devote their life and all for the purpose. Spirituality is not a thing that can be attained by an inferior order of brain and capacity.

आशिष्ठो ब्रह्मिष्ठो बलिष्ठो मेधावी ।      A buoyant soul,  
endued with the vigour of body and mind, keen in intellect  
and of firm resolve, for such a man only is the Kingdom of  
Heaven. The self-discipline and self-mastery that must necessarily precede the spiritual awakening of the human soul is a feat for the best and the boldest of the race. The history of India's past reveals this one fact that all her national heroes

who made the epochs of her history were spiritual men and her best resources were devoted for the production and maintenance of such souls. Hence we say that it is a sign of the degeneracy of her soul that the best minds of the land are drawn to activities other than spiritual and religious. So in order to inaugurate the spiritual and cultural revival of the land it is of supreme importance to foster a movement which will be devoted purely to the spiritual culture of the land. With this sole end in view Swami Vivekananda started the Ramakrishna Mission that it may conserve within its fold all the spiritual forces of the land, augment its power by purity and practice, and then revitalise the spiritual life of India by exerting its influence upon every other institution of the land. But hitherto the country has responded to his clarion call of self-sacrifice and Self-realization rather poorly. Though there have been other religious movements like Brahmo Samaj or the Arya Samaj, they have been either outlandish in their inspiration, or too radical, or too sectarian in their views. So they have failed to present an all-comprehensive and yet truly spiritual outlook of life to modern India. Moreover, to an Indian mind religion and spirituality without the necessary practical life and practical process of God-realization is like fire without heat.

Now, what we want for the maintenance and development of the spiritual culture of this land is a movement which would be catholic enough in its philosophy to include all the different sects and creeds within its capacious bosom and interpret the highest truths of our scriptures in terms of practical life. This necessarily means that those who would be at the helm of this movement must be men of high spiritual realization and character. Then only they can be a great driving force for the spiritual betterment of the people. In this connection we cannot refrain from saying that the sannyasins—the true sannyasins who have relinquished their hearth and home in the name of God and humanity and not those who have merely donned the coloured garb to lead the life of indolence and isolation—have to play a great role. We reiterate again as we have said often in these pages that the ideal of Sannyas is the highest ideal that India can cling to. The Paramahansa shall ever remain the beacon light of her life, and her national banner of ochre-colour betokening renunciation and service must ever be held aloft unsullied. It is the sannyasin who, on the one hand, has all the necessary leisure and self-discipline required for unravelling the mysteries of the soul, and on the other is free enough to offer his services and fruits of

experiences to humanity. Unlike a householder his hands are not shackled by any family responsibility. In Buddhistic India the Bhikhus played perhaps the greatest part in the national regeneration and in bringing about a higher tone of culture in the land. A Buddhist Bhikhu was not only a moving temple but also a moving school and a moving hospital. And the time has come when the Hindu sannyasins must take up the same position in the scheme of national rejuvenation. Because he has taken up the greatest of all vows, the vow of complete self-abnegation and self-dedication, the country expects the greatest from him. The sannyasins are the spiritual soldiers of the country. In their hand lies the protection of the spiritual treasures of the people. So their responsibility is the greatest of all. They must be the foremost social workers,—servants of the nation in the true sense of the term. As sannyasins they have no private axe to grind, nor theirs is the scrambling for pelf and power. They need not seek any position in the society, if they be *true* sannyasins the positions shall seek them. The Hindu society has not degenerated as yet to such an extent as not to accord proper esteem to the life of spirituality and be not receptive enough to all the good influences that a sannyasin can produce.

Next to the sannyasins come the Hindu priests and such other Brahmin householders who are still the teachers of the Hindu religion and in whose keeping is much of our sacred lore. As a vital part of the scheme of the Hindu revival the reformation of our temples must be considered. The temples exerted in the past the most potent influence in shaping the civic life in the light of *dharma* and spirituality and deepened the spiritual culture in the national consciousness. And even to-day they exert no mean influence upon the masses. But unfortunately this very temple institution with all its potencies and possibilities has become the most neglected of all our national institutions. The apathy and indifference of the educated Hindus is mainly due to the fact that the priesthood who officiates in the temple is the most ignorant, and often abominable class. The degeneracy of the Hindu priesthood is reflected not only in the deterioration of the temple institution, but also in the decadence of the religious tone of the society. So, purification of the temples and Hindu priesthood must immediately be attended to if we really want any Hindu revival. In this connection we feel tempted to say that the temple funds instead of being mis-utilised by force of

a statute-like the Hindu Endowments Bill for secular purposes, may very properly be utilised for the education and betterment of the priests, and the post may be made lucrative enough for even the best university men. Unless there be some positive attraction in the profession either in the form of honour and prestige or in money value, the best minds will not be drawn to it nor would its proper improvement be passible. The temples with an educated and devout priesthood shall become ere long great centres not only of religious culture but also of great educative forces. In every other civilized country churches, temples and mosques, are always well utilised for the dissemination of wholesome influence upon the society; only in India they are badly neglected to the great detriment of the religious life of the nation.

The next institution which should be reformed for the purpose of rekindling the spiritual culture of the land is our schools and colleges. No doubt, there are numerous *sabhas* and *samitis* all over the country where the sacred lore of the Hindus is propounded and in that way they supplement to a great extent the educational institutions of the land. Yet it is not the younger generation who are still in the formative stage of their life, that are mostly benefited by such *sabhas* and *samitis* as they seldom frequent such religious associations and their healthy influence scarcely touch the yonger folk of the country. And so it is of utmost importance that the schools and colleges should be given the dignity and form of a temple where not only the *apara vidya* or the secular knowledge will be imparted, but also the *para vidya* or the spiritual knowledge. We don't think there will be much difficulty in reforming our schools and colleges in this line, only if our Ministers of Education be *truly* national in their outlook of life and try to help to bring about a national awakening in the land.

So we see that if the sannyasins, the priests, and the professors be united in purifying their respective institutions and be truly guided by the high spiritual ideals of life in serving the society in their different capacities we can safely predict that in the course of two generations Hindu society will be quite different from what it is to-day.

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**THE RHYTHM OF LIFE**, by Swami Paramananda :

[Published by the Vedanta Centre, Boston, Mass., U. S. A.]

This is a book of simple devotional songs in praise of God. The author feels that a great deal of the grief and sorrow in this world is caused by our mad pursuit after joy and pleasure. Therefore he gives us the following advice :—" He who seeketh pleasure can never escape pain ; For they are coupled—the inseparable twins. Let thy soul live in tranquil harmony Amid pleasure and amid pain " The only way to attain peace in this world is to love Truth which is the same as loving God. And in a beautiful lyric called ' Fire of Truth ' he describes its properties thus :—

It is flame without smoke ;  
It burns without fuel ;  
It dwells in the heart of love ;  
It is eternal life ;  
It dwells in thee, though thou knowest it not, dormant,  
hidden in thy inmost recess.

The attributes of God are sung in many places and in many strains. He is regarded as the ' vision ' of the prophet, the ' soul ' of the poet, the ' song ' of the musician, the ' vigour ' of our body, the lover's ' beloved '—in fact, as the best of created things in the Universe. We cannot therefore help loving Him and depending on Him for all our necessities. But to all those who implore His mercy, He is generous to profusion. The help that he extends to us is simply indescribable. He ' heals ' our wounds, ' cleanses ' our stains, ' brings ' us peace and bliss, ' gives ' us faith, light and hope, ' conquers ' all our ills and ' shields ' us from all danger.

For the life of devotion to God nothing is more necessary than self-sacrifice ; and so there are a few songs about the glory of sacrificing our little self at the altar of the bigger Self.

As for the ' form ' of these songs, not much need be said. They are neither ' prose ' nor ' poetry ' in the conventional sense of the terms. They are the inspired words of a divine soul in communion with God. In fact the author anticipates this criticism and so disarms the critic beforehand in the following lines :—

These thoughts of my inmost soul that I sing  
It mattereth not whether they be in rhyme, rhapsody or prayer.  
The songs of the soul are not made of words.  
The singers that are true sing not with their voice or tongue  
But with feelings which are beyond utterance.

Swami Paramananda has done a valuable service to the West by publishing this book of song-offerings ; because therein he has translated the true tone and feeling of the ' Bhakti ' Literature of India in English and thus he has stood as a real interpreter of the mystic East to the West which is now a days thirsting for spiritual knowledge.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### *Report of the Ramakrishna Mission Work in Kerala, 1924-1925.*

This report, sent to us by a devotee of the Ramakrishna Movement in Kerala, gives a detailed history of the work of the Mission there for the last two years. Thirteen years of silent, steady work by Swami Nirmalanandaji had already borne fruit in about seventeen young men girding up their loins to devote themselves to the cause of Renunciation and Service under the flag of Bhagawan Sri Ramakrishna and the growth of four centres of work at Haripad, Tiruvella, Quilandy and Trivandrum and the widespread distribution of the Mission literature in Malayalam by the publication department at Trivandrum. The period under review opens with the auspicious and solemn function of receiving into the Monastic Order of Raniakrishna eleven disciples in the Haripad Ashrama thus carrying out the first item in the programme of work proposed by Swami Vivekananda for Modern India, viz., Man-making which was the method suggested and adopted by the Swami himself. Then followed the grand opening ceremony of the *Brahmananda Memorial Mutt* at Trivandrum in March, 1924, with a splendid public demonstration which gave a new start to the march of events in future. The gift of a pucca building with spacious rooms and a fine cocoanut garden all around, at Alleppey, by a devotee, was availed of for the removal of the publication department from Trivandrum to this place and the opening in May, 1924, of the *Yogananda Ashrama*. Early in 1925 this centre received further additions and extensions and celebrated Swami Vivekananda's birth-day on a grand scale. In July, 1925, Swami Nirmalanandaji on his return from North India visited the place again and stayed there for six days. The year's celebration of Sri Ramakrishna's birthday was also conducted in the interval under the Swamiji's own supervision. In October, on his way to Bangalore, he again halted here and initiated four more *grihasta* disciples.

The report then makes mention of "the humble but splendid part" played by the Mission in relieving the widespread misery and distress wrought by the last year's extensive floods in Travancore—the feeding and sheltering of two thousands sufferers for ten days by the Alleppey centre when the floods were still on the surge and the post-havoc recuperative measures in various parts of central Travancore expending in all over Rs. 10,000. Here the report pauses to make reference to the mournful loss to the brotherhood of Brahmachari Krishna Aiyar, an active worker in the movement for the last ten years and admired on all hands for his sacrifice, dogged perseverance, devotion, and patience. While on active relief duty in the eastern hilly taluqs of Travancore he got ill of jaundice and heart-ache and was brought back to Trivandrum where he passed away early in 1925. Says the report: "the good work he did is well-known and remains with us while he himself is gone to rest in the merciful bosom of Providence."

Mention is next made of the increasing local support and the growing appreciation of the work of the oldest centres at Haripad, Tiruvella, and Quilandy. Attached to the Ashrama at Haripad have been working a Primary School for the "depressed classes," a Weaving

Institute, and a Medicial Dispensary for the poor. The Weaving Institute in particular has trained up and sent out twelve boys, all of whom have started independent work of their own and are making a living out of that profession and many of whom, it is noticed, belong to the "depressed" classes.

The opening of the Premananda Ashram at Muttom, the initiation into *sannyasa* of a second batch of seven Brahmacharis, the prospective Ashramas at Trichur and Ottappalam, the last of which, it is hoped, will become an accomplished fact in a couple of months—these have been already reported in a previous issue of the Kesari. The report then briefly describes the Swamiji's sojourn at Vycome and Tripoonitura.

Mention is next made of a donation by a devotee of Rs. 3,000 towards the expenses of the Pooja in the Brahmananda Ashrama at Trivandrum, of another Rs. 400 for the roofing of the newly put up shed there, of an acre of paddy land yielding an annual income of Rs. 50 for the Ashrama at Haripad and of another plot of land in Pattenamthitha Taluq. But with all this the income of the Ashramas "is hardly adequate to keep them above want and penury" and we trust that the appeal for more funds to enable the movement to extend its activities will meet with a generous response from the public.

In conclusion the report adds that "a wave of spirituality is permeating and pulsating the fabric of society in the land" and ends with the following tribute of appreciation and admiration for the soul of the movement there "whose scheme of work, silent as it may look, has its own forestalled purpose and plan." :—

"Sri Swami Nirmalanandaji's work in Keralam is thus on the high road to progressive success and hallowed be his name in the land. Religion and philosophy in the new setting of Sri Ramakrishna's and exhibited in the newer limelight of Swami Vivekananda's teachings and preachings, have already got a hold on the thinking men of the day and the people particularly out here in Kerala are receiving the same and are assimilating the value thereof. The good Swami Nirmalanandaji's ministrations have remained all along unostentatious and understood only by his close adherents, but now the time has come for them to expand and for the entire country to appreciate their worth and profit by this renaissance in religious thought and practices. The Swamiji is now a familiar figure on this coast and his name has become a by-word in many a Malabar household. If his words, deed and life have taught us one lesson more than any other it is the great glory of man's joy in service and renunciation and the facilities and possibilities for every man to be religious and virtuous according to his own *adrishta* even under the most trying of circumstances—be he the citizen, the family man or the public servant. He possesses a nature loving and loveable and the only thing that hated and was unsparing in language about was weakness, hypocrisy and humbling in religion as well as in worldly concerns. We dare say that his work in Kerala is only part himself or rather has only begun. We wish that he may be spared to us to the farthest span of life allotted to single man on this earth. And may he live long is our only fervent prayer to the Great Giver of all good in all times and climes."

4. He attempted to seize it by *prana*, but he could not grasp it by *prana*. If he had seized it by *prana*, man would have verily been satisfied by mere smelling of food alone.

5. Then he tried to seize it with the eyes, but he could not seize it by sight. If he had seized it by sight, man would have verily been satisfied by mere sight of food alone.

6. Then he tried to grasp it with the ear, but he could not seize it by the ear. Had he seized it by the ear, man would verily have been satisfied by mere hearing of food alone.

7. Then he wanted to grasp it with the sense of touch, but he could not grasp it by the sense of touch. Had he grasped it by touch, man would verily have been satisfied by only touching food.

8. Then he wanted to grasp it with the mind, but he could not seize it by the mind. Had he seized it by the mind, man would have verily been satisfied by the mere thought of food only.

9. Then he wanted to seize it with the generative organ, but he could not grasp it with the organ. Had he seized it by the organ, man would have been satisfied by mere giving of food only.

तदपानेनाजिघृक्षत्तदवाय । सैषाऽन्नस्य ग्रहो यद्वायुरन्नायुर्वा एष  
यद्वायुः ॥ १० ॥

अपानेन by the *apana* तत् that अजिघृक्षत् tried to grasp, तत् that आवयत् seized, could eat. (तेन हेतुना therefore) स that एष अन्नस्य of this food ग्रहः seizer, the retainer. यत् what वायुः the *vayu* यत् that वायुः the *apanavayu* एष this वै verily अन्नायुः one who lives by food.

10. Then he tried to hold it by *apana*, and he seized it. And therefore this *apanavayu* has become the seizer of food. And verily therefore it is called as one who lives by food.

[NOTE :—*āpanāvayu*—The vital energy which sustains the physical body and maintains its different activities is commonly called by the significant name *prana*; but according to the different physical functions of that vital energy different names are given to its different aspects. These are principally called *prana*, *āpana*, *samana*, *vyana*, and *udana*. *Prana* is sometimes falsely translated as breath and air, though it is one of the many meanings of the Sanskrit word, *prana* or *vayu*. By *āpanāvayu* is meant the vital energy that works throughout the alimentary canal and the digestive organs including the lower intestines. So its function consists in receiving, assimilating, and excreting of food. Hence, of all the senses of man it is only the *āpanāvayu* which has been spoken of here as the 'seizer' of food.]

स ईक्षत कथं न्विदं मद्गते स्यादिति स ईक्षत कतरेण प्रपद्या इति । स ईक्षत यदि वाचाऽभिव्याहृतं यदि प्राणेनाभिप्राणितं यदि चक्षुषा दृष्टं यदि श्रोत्रेण श्रुतं यदि त्वचा स्पृष्टं यदि मनसा ध्यातं यद्यपानेनाभ्यपानितं यदि शिशनेन विसृष्टमथ कोऽहमिति ॥ ११ ॥

सः he ईक्षत contemplated इदं this मद्गते without me कथं how नु certainly, verily स्यात् exist. सः he ईक्षत meditated कतरेण by what way प्रपद्ये shall reach. स ईक्षत he thought यदि if वाचा with the speech अभिव्याहृतं utterance (भवेत् is made), यदि if प्राणेन with the smell अभिप्राणितं smelling (be done), यदि if चक्षुषा with the eyes दृष्टं seen (be done), यदि if श्रोत्रेण with the ear श्रुतं hearing (be performed), यदि if त्वचा with the skin (the sense of touch) स्पृष्टं touching (be done), यदि if मनसा with the mind ध्यातं thinking (be accomplished), यदि if अपानेन with the *āpana* अभ्यपानितं the digestion and excretion (be done), यदि if शिशनेन with the generative organ विसृष्टं emitting (be performed), अथ then अहं I कः who !

11. He thought: 'How can all these be verily without me !'

He pondered : 'By what way should I enter into it ?'

He thought : 'If it be (sufficient) for the speech to make utterance, if smelling be done by the sense of smell, if the seeing is done by the eyes, if the hearing is accomplished by the ears, if the feeling of touch is performed by

the skin, if the thinking is accomplished by the mind; if the *apana* performs digestion and excretion, if the generative organ emits, then what am I !'

[NOTE:—The inner significance of the *mantra* is that the body with the aggregate of the senses would be perfectly meaningless and incapable of proper function without an intelligent principle, the soul, to guide it from within. There is a Sanskrit adage which has been accepted as an axiomatic truth by the thinkers of ancient India. It is सङ्घतस्य परार्थत्वात् i.e., a combination of different elements must necessarily be for an entity quite different from all the composing elements. As for e.g., a house built by different composing materials is meant for the dwelling of man or any other living being quite different from the materials of composition; so the body which is composed of the different materials must necessarily be meant for the purpose of one quite different from the composing elements. This is one of the arguments adopted by the *Sankhya* school to prove the existence of *Purusha*, the pure principle of Intelligence who is dwelling in, yet quite different from, the body which is composed of the different modifications of *Pra-kriti* or matter.

The *Atman* is signified here as a monarch residing in the palace of this body and for whose purpose the different functionaries, the senses, are performing their respective duties.]

स एतमेव सीमानं विदार्यैतया द्वारा प्रापद्यत । सैषा विद्वतिनाम द्वास्तदेतानन्दनम् । तस्य त्रय अवस्थास्त्रयः स्वप्ना अयमावसथोऽयमावसथोऽयमावसथ इति ॥ १२ ॥

सः he, the *Atman* एतं this सीमानं the temple of the head विदार्य having opened एतयाद्वारा by that door प्रापद्यत entered. सा एषा that विद्वति *Vidriti*, torn asunder नाम is named द्वाः door. तत् therefore एतत् it नानन्दनम् *nandanam* the place of bliss. तस्य his त्रयः three आवस्थाः dwelling place त्रयः three स्वप्नाः dream, sleep. अयं this आवसथः dwelling place, अयं this आवसथः dwelling place, अयमावसथः this dwelling place.

(Then) he entered (the body) having opened the temple of the head. Therefore that is called *Vidriti*, door. It is verily the *Nandana*. He has three dwelling places and

three sleeping states. This is his dwelling place, this is his dwelling place, this is his dwelling place.

[NOTE:—Then he entered the body &c—It is believed that there is a subtle opening in the temple of the head where the *sushumna* path ends and through which the *prana* of the yogin is supposed to depart; and therefore it is described here as the door through which the ray of the *Paramatman* enters into the body and becomes the conditioned *jivatman*. The cortex or the brain is the organ of the mind and the seat of consciousness. All the motor and sensory activities of man proceed from the cerebral centres, and therefore brain, or loosely speaking, the head, is the first and the last place of consciousness in the human body, and probably that is why the supposed opening in the temple is described here as the entrance of the soul into the body, and it is also the door through which the soul departs.

*Vidriti door*—The door that has been flung open.

*Nandanam*—That opening in the head is called here *nandanam* the place of bliss, as here one realizes the supreme bliss of the Brahman in the state of *samadhi*. The concentration of consciousness in the cerebral centre called *sahasrara* is what is known as the highest superconscious state or *samadhi*, in which the unconditioned beatitude of Brahman is experienced.

*The three dwelling places*—i.e., the eyes in the awakened state, the mind or the throat in the dreaming state, and the heart in the deep sleep state. Or, the body of the father, the womb of the mother and one's own body.

*The three sleeping states*—i.e., the awakened state, the dreaming state and deep sleep state. Even the awakened state is included here in the sleeping state, because the experiences of the awakened state, when compared with the reality of the *Brahma* consciousness, are as much unreal as those of the dreaming state. The *Brahma* consciousness which is absolute consciousness and therefore immutable and permanent by its nature, is the true awakened state of the soul. All other states of consciousness are but dreams of *maya*.

*This is his dwelling place &c*—The assertion is repeated here thrice, in the way of pointing out, as it were, the three aforesaid dwelling places of the *Atman*.]

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

" Let the lion of Vedanta roar."

" Let me tell you, strength, strength is what we want

And the first step in getting strength is to uphold

The Upanishads and believe that ' I am the Atman.' "

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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## PRAYER

स तन्मयोऽष्टाभूत ईशसंस्थो ज्ञः सर्वगो भुवनस्यास्य गोप्ता ।

य ईशोऽस्य जगतो नित्यमेव नान्यो हेतुर्विद्यत ईशनाय ॥

यो ब्रह्माणं विदधाति पूर्वं यो वै वेदांश्च प्रहिणोति तस्मै ।

तै ह देवं आत्मबुद्धिप्रकाशं मुमुक्षुर्वै शरणमहं प्रपद्ये ॥

**H**E is the Soul of the Universe ; He is immortal ; His is the Rulership ; He is the All-knowing, the All-per-vading, the Protector of the Universe, the Eternal Ruler. None else is there efficient to govern the World eternally.

He who at the beginning of creation projected Brahma (i. e., the Universal consciousness), and Who delivered the Vedas unto him—seeking liberation I go for refuge unto that Effulgent One, whose light turns the understanding towards the Atman.

—*Swetaswatara Upanishad*, VI. 17, 18.

## SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE GREAT MASTER

(Continued from Vol. XI, page 410)

SWAMI SARADANANDA

**W**HEN Tota Puri left Dakshineswar after his long stay of eleven months, a strong resolve came to the mind of the Master to remain in that *Nirvikalpa* state continuously thereafter. And indeed it is a wonderful story how he could remain in that *nirvikalpa* state where individual consciousness gets fused and lost in the transcendental, the state where all the relative consciousness of 'me' and 'mine' is completely obliterated, and the transcendental existence of the Divinity is experienced within the soul. It is that state of supreme unitary consciousness in which not even great Teachers and Incarnations of yore, not to speak of the ordinary striving souls, could remain long, but the Master remained in it for six long months. During that period he had absolutely no consciousness of the body, nor of its physical needs. So, much less could he have any dealings or conversation with others! In that state there was neither 'me' and 'mine,' nor 'thou' and 'thine'; neither one nor two! For the consciousness of two naturally arises from the consciousness of one. In that state all the activities of mind are completely stilled, and reigns there nothing but a transcendental Peace. In the words of Sankara then—

किमपि सततबोधं केवलानन्दरूपं  
निरूपममतिवेलं नित्यमुक्तं निरीहं  
निरवधिगगनाभं निष्कलं निर्विकल्पं  
हृदि कलयति विद्वान् ब्रह्म पूर्णं समाधौ ॥

"The wise one realises in his heart, through samādhi, the Infinite Brahman which is inexpressible eternal Knowledge and absolute Bliss, which has no exemplar, which transcends all limitations, is ever free and without activity,—which is like the limitless sky, indivisible and absolute."

What is felt there is nothing but one beginningless and endless and causeless unconditioned bliss,—the bliss that is beyond all time and space, all name and form ! In that state, the soul, the Atman, freed from the limitations of the body-consciousness, transcending all the ideas and feelings that hover in the mind, soaring above all relativity of life, remains in His own ineffable, singular, blissful state of transcendence ! It is the state that is described in our Shastras as “ Atman revelling in the bliss of the Atman ”. The Master was experiencing the state in the aforesaid way.

The Master used to say, referring to this *nirvikalpa* state that he experienced no difficulty whatsoever in attaining to that state because, previous to this, he had dedicated all his desires and attachments for the worldly enjoyments to the hallowed feet of the Divine Mother. Did he not dedicate all, saying, “ Mother, take back this knowledge and this ignorance ; take back Thy *dharma* (picty) and take back Thy *adharma* ; take back Thy good, take back Thy evil ; take back Thy sin, take back Thy virtue ; take back Thy fame and take back Thy infamy ; only give me, Mother, the pure *bhakti* to Thy feet ” ? And so saying, did he actually shake off from his mind all kinds of desires for these things through the love for the Mother. We, ordinary people, cannot even imagine, much less feel, an infinitesimally small portion of that all-exclusive, all-absorbing ecstatic love of the Master. Even if we say, in so many words of mouth, “ Lord, all that are mine I dedicate to Thee, ” in actual practice we completely remove God from His natural seat of our heart, and instal there our own self and self-interest, and busy ourselves in computing gain and loss ! In every action we think, “ What others would say ? ” and try to mould our life in that light. It is not unoften that the thought of the future either oppresses or exalts us, and we have, firmly rooted, the conviction in our mind that if we cannot really break and recreate the universe, we have at least the capacity to change and re-shape it.

But the Master never possessed such a theivish mind as ours. Once he said, "Mother, take back all these things given by Thee". Even from that very moment not even a flicker of desire would arise again in his mind for those things. Therefore we have noticed in his life that whatever he has once offered to the Divine Mother he could never call them again as his own.

Here we want to tell one more thing to our readers. Though the Master dedicated to the Divine Mother everything like piety and impiety, sin and virtue, good and evil, fame and infamy and other qualities relating to the body and mind, yet he could not say, "Mother, take back Thy truths and Thy untruths". The Master himself explained the reason of it. He once said, "Had I dedicated truths to Her, then it would not have been possible for me to maintain the truth, viz., that I have dedicated everything to Her." Indeed, even after relinquishing everything to Mother, amazingly rigid had he been in his adherence to truth ! If he had said that he would go to a place on a particular day at a particular hour, he would go there exactly at that time ; if he had said that he would accept a certain thing from a certain person, he accepted it from that person only and could not receive it from any one else ; if he had said that he would not take a certain thing or would not do a certain work, from that time forward he was never able to take it or do it. Sri Ramakrishna used to say, "One who maintains fidelity to truth attains the God of Truth ; one who is established in truthfulness, Mother never allows his words to be falsified." And what innumerable instances of it have we not seen in his life ! Here we like to tell a few of them to our readers.

One day, the famous devotee, "Gopal's Mother,"\*

\*A Brahmin woman-devotee used to come often to Sri Ramakrishna at Dakshineswar. She was widowed in her girlhood, but led an extremely pious and devout life. She used to look upon Krishna as her child and used to see constantly the vision of Boy-Krishna, or Gopala as coming and tasting food from her hand and playing with her as a child would with his mother. Hence she was called Gopalar-Ma, i. e., the mother of Gopal.

arranged to feed the Master, herself cooking the meal at Dakshineswar. When the food was served, and Sri Ramakrishna was about to take it, he found the rice was not well cooked ; and with a little feeling of annoyance he declared, " How can I take such uncooked rice ! No longer shall I take rice from her hand." When these words were uttered by the Master those who were present there thought that it was a mere expression of annoyance at the carelessness of the lady and that it had no more significance than to put her on guard for the future, for the Master's love and admiration for the lady was unbounded, and he could never have meant to carry out his threat literally into action. Everybody hoped that he would forget all about it very soon and he would take food, including rice, from her hand as usual. But the later happening quite contradicted such hope. The Master soon after developed a deadly cancer in his throat, and could take rice no more. And thus his words to " Gopal's Mother " were literally fulfilled.

One day, at Dakshineswar, the Master said almost in a state of trance, " Hereafter I won't take anything else, only *payasam*\*, only *payasam*." The Holy Mother was just then bringing the meal for him. When she heard it, she was very much frightened, as she knew well that seldom his words were falsified. So she exclaimed, " Why need you take only *payasam* ? I shall cook for you rice and soup, which you can take very well." But the Master declared in the same mood, " No, only *payasam*." A short time after that, he got that disease of the throat which prevented him from taking any kind of curry or spiced preparation; he had to live upon milk-rice and such other like preparations of milk.

Shambhu Mullick was a famous charitable millionaire of Calcutta. The Master used to count Him as the second of the four principal supporters of his,

\*A kind of pudding prepared of milk, sugar and wheat or rice or some other grain.

shown to him by the Divine Mother. He had a nice garden-house close to the Kali Temple in Dakshineswar. There he used to spend much of his time in religious discourses with Sri Ramakrishna. There he had a small charitable dispensary also. At that time Sri Ramakrishna was suffering from chronic diarrhea. One day when the Master went to see Shambhu Mallick, the latter suggested that he should begin to take a small dose of opium every day, and further requested the Master to take it from him when he would be returning to the temple. Sri Ramakrishna agreed to do it. Then subsequently in the course of conversation, both forgot all about it.

When evening approached, the Master got up and proceeded to return to the Kali Temple. On the way he remembered that he agreed to take opium from Shambhu. So he came back again to Shambhu's place but could not find Shambhu there as he had gone into the inner apartments of the house. Then Sri Ramakrishna took a small quantity of the drug from one of the servants of Shambhu Mallick in the dispensary. And when he was returning to the temple-garden, he began to feel a peculiar sensation about him ; he could not see his path any further and he felt as if something was pulling his feet to the ditches by the road-side. He tried to be his own self and found that that was not the right path ; yet he could not make out the path. Then, thinking that he had strayed away, he wanted to come back to Shambhu's garden and, to his surprise, he found that he could perceive his path quite clearly to that direction. He retraced his steps back to the gate of Shambhu's garden and, with much care and scrutiny, determined his right path and proceeded some distance towards the temple. But the same confusion and staggering he experienced again. When such things happened two or three times continually, it occurred to him that Shambhu had asked him to take the opium from him (Shambhu). But instead of taking the drug directly from him the Master took it from the servants, and there-

fore the Mother was not allowing him to go. In the first place, the servant ought not to have given the medicine without Shambhu's permission, and secondly, according to his agreement, the Master too should not have taken it from any person other than Shambhu himself. Therefore in this taking of opium were involved both lying and thieving, and therefore it was that the Mother was preventing his return by confounding his path. Next he came back straight to the dispensary but could not find the servant. He too must have gone elsewhere. So, finding no other alternative, he took the drug, wrapped it up in paper, and threw it inside the dispensary room through the window, crying loudly, "Here I leave behind the opium." After this, when he was returning to the temple-garden, he found his path perfectly clear, and had none of those confusions he was experiencing before.

The Master used to say, "Because I have offered my whole self to Her, therefore She is holding me by the hand. She never allows me to take a single false step." Innumerable instances of this kind we have heard from the Master about his uncommon fidelity to truth. This kind of truthfulness, this type of complete self-resignation, is unimaginable to the ordinary man.

To exemplify such intense resignation, the Master used to give us often a homely illustration. In the village parts where there is no thorough-fare, people go from one part to the other walking over the small dykes raised upon the boundaries of the fields. The dykes are generally high and narrow. And while going over them, a father takes the small child in his lap, lest the child might fall down if he were to walk by himself. But the elder boy being capable enough goes all by himself, although he holds the hand of his father. In the middle of the path, seeing a kite or some other object of interest, both the children clap their hands. The younger one, being held in the lap of the father, is quite

safe. But the elder one, while going to clap, lets go his hold upon his father's hand, tumbles down, and hurts himself. Similarly, absolutely no fear has he whom the Mother is holding by the hand. But one who is holding the Mother's hand has fear enough—he will have a fall the moment he loses his hold upon Her hand.

Owing to such unprecedented devotion to God, the Master had no attachment to, or attraction for, any object or person of this world, and therefore it was that nothing of worldly objects or mundane desires stood in his way to the attainment of *Nirvikalpa Samadhi*. Only one thing stood in his way and it was the very form of the Divine Mother whom he had been worshipping so long, pouring all his heart's adoration and love upon Her feet, and considering Her as the highest of the high, the noblest of the noble—the most beautiful form

“सौम्या सौम्यतराशेष सौम्येभ्यस्त्वत्सुन्दरीः”

(The charmingly handsome, the most charming of all charming objects, the extremely beautiful one !)

The Master used to say, “The moment I concentrated the whole of my mind, and was about to focus it upon Unity, I found the Mother's form stood before me, and, at once, the desire to go beyond it, relinquishing the form, vanished ! The mind would not go beyond it. As many times as I tried to make my mind perfectly contentless by driving away all thought-forms, so many times I experienced the same difficulty. At last, after pondering well, I made my mind strong, and imagined knowledge as a sword, and with it I cut the form of the Divine Mother into twain ! Then there remained nothing in the mind. It quickly soared to the *Nirvikalpa state*.” To us these words may appear meaningless, as never have we attempted to make any form of the Divine Mother our own, nor learnt to dedicate so exclusively

all our heart's emotion to Her. In its stead, that kind of all-absorbing love we possess for our body and the little self. And therefore we tremble at the prospect of death, or of any sudden change of our self. But that was not the case with the Master. He, with all his mind and soul held the Mother as the only reality and the only object worth loving, and was spending the whole of his time in the worship of the holy image of the Mother,—Her form naturally occupied the whole of his mind, and filled the whole of his soul. Therefore, when that form, its only content, was removed from the mind, it became perfectly contentless and devoid of all other mentation ; it attained the highest super-conscious state of *Nirvikalpa Samadhi*. Reader, if you cannot comprehend it fully, at least try to picture to your mind, to some extent, how deeply and fully the Master's soul was imbued with the love of the Divine Mother.

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## THE PSYCHOLOGICAL VERITIES IN SPIRITUAL LIFE

SWAMI SIDDHESWARANANDA

**T**HE study of mind and the nature of consciousness was carried on in India and satisfactory solutions had been arrived at, when civilisation had not yet dawned on European soil. In the modern age when we find reputed scholars giving out opinions similar to, or approximating, the truths discovered by Patanjali and other psychologists of ancient India, we cannot but admire the scientific precision in which studies in such a subtle subject as psychology, were made by our forefathers. Charles Baudouin in his book "Suggestion and Auto-suggestion" has the following words of admiration: "As one of the curiosities of history and further *as a lesson in humility* (the *italics* are ours) we may point out that the states just described . . . . . are described with considerable psychological acumen, though not of course in modern psychological terminology, in the precepts by which for centuries past the Yogis of Hindustan have been accustomed to attain self-mastery." Again, in his concluding paragraph, he makes another beautiful statement, too well appreciated in India. He says: "The work of modern science is a great achievement, but is incomplete. For its completion a certain change is required both in outlook and method. As the philosopher Spir has well put it, 'We are masters of nature externally alone, inwardly we are nature's slaves!' Studying only too well all that surrounds us, we have forgotten our own personality, and now or never is the moment when we must put into practice the maxim of Thales, 'Know Thyself.' The doctrine of the New Nancy School in conjunction with other doctrines of contemporary psychologists enables us to make a great advance in this knowledge."

To understand the contribution of contemporary psychologists towards the knowledge of our own selves, we have to study the history of the findings made by different scholars in these years. Of these scholars we can mainly speak of three schools of opinion. Their teachings, different though they may be in their pursuits, only supplement one another.

First of all, we have to consider the Freudian school of psychologists. Freud is a doctor by profession who unwittingly

embarked on a new sphere of knowledge in diagnosing his patients. The results of his experiments have made it possible for a genetic theory of mind to be gradually built up. Freud is mainly a clinical psychologist. "In his efforts to ascertain the significance and therefore the genesis of neurotic symptoms, he made the remarkable and quite unexpected discovery that these have a remarkable psychological meaning and purpose, one, however, that is totally unknown to the patient. . . . He found that the patient opposed a dynamic resistance to the revealing of his previously unconscious thought and Freud concluded that the force thus manifesting itself outwardly was the same one that had hitherto prevented the patient from becoming aware of these thoughts. To the force operative in the latter (inward) direction he gives the name of repression." For tracing the unconscious thought Freud used a technique known as *psycho-analysis*. As a result, he found himself in a region of mind which was quite different in character from the conscious mind. This sphere of mind he calls the "*unconscious*". The nature of this buried stratum of mind next engaged his attention and he was able "to detect the contribution made by the unconscious to various modes of mental activity".

Mental life is summarised by Freud under two principles: (1) the pleasure principle, and (2) the reality principle. The former represents the primary original form of mental activity and is characteristic of the earliest stages of human development. In its primary attributes we find a tendency to avoid pain and disagreeableness and a never-ceasing demand for immediate gratification of various desires—of a distinctly primitive and lowly order. This principle is essentially anti-social. But in the *reality principle* we find the attempts made by the ego to adapt itself to the exigencies of the real world outside. In other words, the *reality-principle* checks the animal impulse in man by social and ethical considerations. These two principles are always in conflict. Man becomes ethically perfected and advances socially as a civilised being only when he is able to change the under-currents of his animal nature into very healthy humanitarian channels.

Freud asserted that man is merely a sexual being and all his actions can be explained by this nature alone. This created a wave of excitement against the author who wanted to explain the richest and noblest sentiments of man by 'the

reproach of the basest naturalism'. "To present religion, morality, art and the like as sublimated sexuality would be as lacking in taste as to characterise the execution of Beethoven's violin concerto as a refined form of the vibration of catgut."

In this connection we have to remind our readers that Freud used the word "sex" in a sense quite different from what we ordinarily mean by it. A lack of understanding regarding the true implication of the term has caused all this brunt of opposition. In India we need not be astounded at this discovery. In the Vedas it is declared that desire first arose in the mind of the Creator. He proclaimed "*Ekoham, bahusyam*," "I am one, let Me be many". The whole universe is projected from the mind of the Creator because of this impulse. This process of bifurcation goes on *ad infinitum* and this is called evolution. The unconditioned appears as the conditioned, the path of *Pravritti Marga*. At the same time, this order can be reverted; if this impulse is checked and transmuted into a higher energy, that will carry us back to the centre. The energy that finds expression in diversity is the same energy that would achieve unity. The former, Freud calls the sex energy. If he had stated that the primitive passions of man would never change their colour, in spite of all adjustments made by the *reality-principle* to accommodate them for social purposes, then there would be some appropriateness in the charges levelled at him. But when he states that man can sublimate elementary emotions, primitive and anti-social in character, to high levels of mental achievements, he unconsciously admits that man is also a spiritual being. Freud being a doctor of medicine, his main concern was his neurotic patients in whom he discovered that emotions undergoing inhibition had found outlets of expression through diseases. By the technique of psycho-analysis, he found a way to open up the buried stratum of the mind in which unrealised emotions had undergone repression. Such a process alleviated the illness.

All the facts of the mental world cannot solely be explained as Freud has done. In the make-up of our minds, we have to consider not only the emotional aspects, but also the cognitive and the volitional. As on the conscious plane, emotion, cognition and volition determine the course of thought and action, so also, in all the subconscious or unconscious workings of the mind, the counterparts of these are equally visible.

The work of intellect is accomplished by instinct and intuition. Instincts can be traced in the primitive tastes of man realised in dreams. Intuition is seen in the revelations that flash on the conscious mind which cannot be explained away by intelligence or instinct. The French philosopher Bergson understood the existence of the intuitional faculty in man. The Vedantic philosophy posits another sphere called the superconscious and Bergson's intuition touches but the fringe of it. Only when all the other different *purdahs* of the mind are removed, can we gain access to this region. The emotions have to be sublimated; the instincts purified. There must be, to use a Sanskrit phrase, *Bhava-suddhi*, to reach this terminus of knowledge.

The work of volition is equally noticeable in the sub-conscious regions of the mind. But the character of this volition undergoes a change when it functions in the lower strata of the mind. The word 'volition' in French is called *vouloir*. Though sometimes meaning will, this word often means wish. The process of wish is on the road to volition, but has not reached it. In that transformation from wishing to willing, to volition, the imagination is lighted up and intensified by some disturbing emotion, slips as it were, gets the lead and prevents the wish becoming will. Imagination then wins. So if an idea is planted in the mind which will be worked out by the force of imagination when the wish is strong for the fulfilment of that idea, that idea will be realised and the wish fulfilled, provided there is not the counteracting force of any opposite idea. The reality of this theory as a workable hypothesis was experimented upon by M. Coue at Nancy. He has ushered in a new epoch in the wonder-world of psychological realities, by the miraculous cures effected in patients who sought his advice, and who according to him, cured themselves, by practising the theory of auto-suggestion he has propounded. Before his time, Nancy was already the seat of another school of psycho-therapy. From his predecessors, Coue learnt that even in the so-called hypnotic state, the condition was brought about really through the influence of the imagination of the patients upon themselves. Baudouin is the first great theoretical exponent of Coue's teachings. There are three novel features in the teachings of the New Nancy School:—

- I. In hypnotic phenomena, it is not the suggestion given out by the operator that is the essential force in working it

out ; but the real cause for success lies in the subject himself. The suggestion thrown out by the operator, has to be accepted by the subject and become a real auto-suggestion. As a corollary, the chief advantages of psycho-therapeutic cure can be got without outside suggestion and without even producing a hypnotic state. Thus for auto-suggestion, the subject can produce a state of passivity by himself, and freed from any state of tension of body or mind, he can present to himself the idea he wants to place before his mind. Thereby the subject can transform his whole outlook on life.

II. Coue lays great stress on his law of the reversed effort. The operation of this law is the cause of the failure of our attempts. " It means that so long as the imagination is adverse, so long as a counter-suggestion is at work, the effort of the conscious will acts by contraries. We must think or imagine rightly before we can will rightly. In a word, our formula must not be ' who wills can, ' but ' who thinks can, ' or ' who imagines can. ' "

III. The most significant phenomena occur in the domain of the sub-conscious. The new powers which auto-suggestion offers to mankind are based upon the acquirement of a reflective control of the operations of the sub-conscious. Therein the teachings of the New Nancy School are at one with the findings of the Freudian school of psychologists.

Coue has shown to the world the practical value of his teachings. The sensation created by the system of cures he recommended, made the common people look up to him as a worker of miracle, a title which he disclaims totally. He made people turn to themselves for help in all mental and bodily ailments. He has held out the value of faith and shown how in man lies the solution of all the mysteries that confound him. The effects of his experiments have a far-reaching value. It is creating a revolution in the minds of many. The laws of criminology, the principles of education, theories of medicine and cure, and the growth of social institutions, have to be re-interpreted in the light of these new discoveries of the modern schools of psychology. In an understanding of the workings of the sub-conscious and its education we have the key for the moulding of the future. In the sub-conscious is capitulated the cultural history of mankind. In studying the actions and motives of man we must know that the whole contents of his sub-conscious mind equally contribute in directing their course. As a man is most powerfully in-

fluenced by his external environment, so also, his internal world must be strongly reckoned with in estimating the make-up of his character.

Psycho-analysis is the weapon wherewith to dig into the different layers of the mind, and suggestion and auto-suggestion are the seeds to be implanted therein, and by understanding properly the mechanism of character-formation, it is no wonder that we shall be able to convert this human life from a vale of sorrows into an eternal pleasure-garden.

Suggestion may be defined as the acceptance of an idea by the mind, especially by the so-called sub-conscious (unconscious) independently of adequate logical grounds for such acceptance. "It is an instance of ideo-motor action. The idea is placed before the mind, rather aroused vividly in the mind when the mind is in a state where opposing and conflicting ideas have no chance of making themselves felt, where-upon this implanted idea tends to realise itself." So the things necessary for working out suggestion are a passive state in the subject—muscular as well as sensory—together with concentration upon the idea. One must put oneself into "a state of contention," a state of concentration without effort. "It is essential" Baudouin says, "that the attention should remain spontaneously immobilised. This is what happens when one tells the beads." The religious aspirant does the same thing. The whole course of his *sadhana* (spiritual practices) is to de-hypnotise himself. All along he has been thinking himself to be finite matter bound by all limitations. He has to awaken permanently the consciousness that he is the Atman, ever free, ever perfect. For that, he has a regulated course of practices laid down in the Ashtanga Yoga. Baudouin is astonished at the teachings of the Hindu Yogis, for he has the following:—"The two states, whose acquirement must be the novice's first aim are known as *Pratyahara* (mental examination) and *Dharana* (concentration of mind upon a thought)." He then quotes from a treatise on Yoga. He says: "As for auto-suggestion we encounter it in Yoga but tinged with mysticism. The sacred word '*Aum*' is repeated a myriad times, the three sounds A-U-M being well separated and uttered in the respective notes do-mi-sol. This, we are told, produces a mental transformation in the subject, which is preparatory to great spiritual progress."

For suggestion and auto-suggestion to work effectively, genuine faith has to be developed. If the subject can over-

come all obsessive fears and feel that the springs of success in life are in himself, then he becomes a fit candidate to practise the methods which Coue recommends. Or if he believes in God and the ever-merciful nature of a benign Providence, then any stand he may take on the basis of this belief will work miracles. Dr. Pfister, while estimating the value of religion, says: "I confess that the beauty of a healthy, ethically pure piety has only become overwhelmingly clear to me. . . . ." At present it is the therapeutic value of the discoveries of the New Nancy School that has attracted the attention of the world. These discoveries have also a far-reaching effect upon the development of spiritual life.

The difficulties of fashioning one's life on a spiritual basis are too numerous to be mentioned. Our scriptures have said that it is as difficult to attempt this task as to walk on the edge of a sharp razor. Yet the game has not been given up and history is not wanting in examples of men who have truly lived the life of holiness and spirituality. The discoveries of the modern schools of psychology only help us in understanding ourselves more, to steer ourselves clear of the cataracts and currents of life that often wreck our hopes and make us despair of the Truth.

We have noted that the emotional, cognitive and volitional functions of the mind are visible in the workings of the sub-conscious mind. The blessed feeling that we must live the life spiritual often comes to many of us; but we are deterred from our path mainly because our sub-conscious self has not properly responded to the call of the spirit. So the aspirant after spiritual life has to educate and refine his sub-conscious mind. All the primitive feelings of man have not left off their colour and this can be easily seen from the ideas that crop up when the sub-conscious is tapped. In the phraseology of Freud, the war between the pleasure principle and the reality principle is very intense. As a result, most of our emotions undergo "repression". They lie in wait in some form or other in the ambushes of our minds and take us often unawares. These emotions have to be sublimated. In the degree a man is able to sublimate his baser passions into finer emotions lies his success in the spiritual life. If he is unsuccessful, his life will be a struggle in the darkness. All the repressions have to be cleared up. And the best way for doing it is by active work. There should not be a lop-sided

development in the aspirant. He must try to educate his emotional, cognitive and volitional faculties as best as he can without starving any one of them for want of sufficient exercise. Very often the aspirant, once beaming with hope and strength, turns out into an abject, neuresthenic, crazy, passionate and eccentric person, because he has disregarded some of the psychological verities of spiritual life. The aspirant is unable to meet the oppositions from his lower self. The most powerful demand on him is made by the sex impulse and on the success of the aspirant in transmuting this impulse into a higher energy depends his success in the spiritual life. Extraordinary vigilance and intense activity are demanded from the aspirant, for the enemy comes to him in different forms. He must be able to find out the real feeling behind all the confusing emotions he is at times a prey to. Once a disciple of Sri Ramakrishna went to him and in his youthful enthusiasm to lead the spiritual life, requested the Master to bless him that he may be successful in killing his passions. But Sri Ramakrishna affectionately told him, "My boy, increase them a thousand-fold, but only change their direction Godwards." The same energy that works as the sex impulse is transformed into divine impulse. We have to realise this secret. The demands made on us by the sex impulse are often exacting and the aspirant must be sufficiently fortified not to succumb to them, nor allow them to undergo inhibition in the lower layers of the mind. Hence it is that a life of activity is required. A monk's life in the cloister, a life of inaction, before one is fit for it, accounts for the miserable failure of many aspirants. The great Swami Vivekananda has laid out a plan of action for his disciples in which he recommends a harmonious application of all our mental faculties for the development of our spiritual life. So in the beginning, the aspirant must work consciously to find out ways of sublimating his emotions. If one applies oneself to a life of intense work, of service to one's fellowmen, one gets ample opportunities to sublimate one's emotions. These tendencies in one's mind are the seeds of one's Karma. These can well be worked out by service. It is a fact that they must find a way out. In serving our fellowmen and country with the idea that they are but expressions of the Great Virat, we not only find outlets for our emotions, but also raise ourselves in the spiritual plane. But on the other hand, if we do not allow these emotions to be

sublimated, the force of "repression" will so barricade our spiritual life that ere long we shall have to vegetate all our lives with our ideals unrealised. These repressed emotions will give rise to all kinds of mental, moral and physical illness, that will baffle the attempts of all doctors. It will then be our Karma to suffer perpetual illness and disease, the expressions on the physical plane, according to Freud, of these repressed emotions. The Lord we have to serve is a jealous God and if we do not serve Him in His creatures, we shall have to pay the penalty in the form of illness and disease.

One of the primary requisites for the aspirant in spiritual life is to get the blessing of a Teacher, a Guru, one who has realised God. The Guru tests the earnestness of the student by noting the tendencies of his nature. He then prescribes to him a course of action. The student has only to follow this to enable him to achieve the results. By personal service to the master and by constantly living with him a mental '*rapprochement*' is established between the Guru and his chela. When the mind of the chela is sufficiently fertilised by faith in the Reality, the teacher plants the seed of spirituality in his mind. This instruction is generally done in India in an imposing and sublime manner. With prayers, fasts and vigils the disciple awaits the appointed hour when the man of realisation will impart the highest truth to his disciple. The student was being tested by the master for many days or even months and years, for he must be a proper candidate. His attention must be keenly rivetted *spontaneously* on the Ideal; for, then only will his sub-conscious self accept his choice of the life-ideal. And when the Guru gives the *Upadesha*, they become sacred words to the student, the precious possession of his life. This ceremony ever coveted by all spiritual aspirants is known as the "*Deeksha*," the imparting of the spiritual power. If the master is a gigantic personality, no word or sign is required for the transmission of this power. He shall be able to do it by a mere wish, a touch.

After this ceremony is over, the student is to meditate on the teachings till he becomes one with them. Some of the difficulties he has to meet with we have mentioned already. If the progress is slow, or if there are periods of darkness, called by mystics "the Dark Night of the soul," the aspirant should subject his mind to severe analysis, *Vichara*. Thereby he shall be able to find out the obstacles, the various 'complexes' of his mind that block his path. Very often the *sadhana* is

done with the help of the various Bhavas, mainly the five classical ones—Santa, Dasya, Sakhya, Vatsalya and Madhura. These Bhavas help the great ideal to blossom and flower by the force of an '*enveloping emotion*'. The ideal has to be made vivid always before the mind's eye. If the mind thinks more of the obstacles, they become an obsession and by the working of the law of the reversed effort, our attempts will be frustrated. If we march on to the east, the west must fall off naturally from us. The positive ideal should be our beacon light and we have to progress on with that pole star to guide us.

Above all we have to avoid, in the words of Sri Ramakrishna, all thefts in the chamber of our own hearts. Very often we assume we are meditating on the ideal, but in reality we are only being duped by our own day-dreams that have no bearing at all on that ideal. In the sub-conscious mind a regular current of thought, in tune with our ideal, should be established permanently. When this is accomplished, the ideal of our life will come within the range of practical achievement and the very purpose of human existence will be achieved in that true resurrection of the spirit of man from all the tabernacles of thought and form that constitute this material world.

SWAMI SIDDHESWARANANDA

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## ENERGY IS RELIGION\*

**Y**EARS ago Aswini Kumar went to Dakshineswar to visit the Great Sage†. As usual he was kindly received and a lively conversation followed with Sri Ramakrishna in course of which he asked Aswini Kumar "Aswini, are you acquainted with Naren (afterwards Swami Vivekananda)? Perhaps not—I so much wish you to be. He is a real man. Narayan incarnate, a B. A. too, unmarried." While speaking, Thakur's‡ face brightened up and pointing to his breast he continued, "If I do'nt meet him for two days it writhes." Suddenly he became uneasy with an anxious look, and throbbing heart, apprehending some unexpected danger. With tears in his eyes he added, "Poor Naren, his father has died, he is in great difficulty with his younger brothers, does not know how to secure food for them. Oh Aswini, just tell me he will not at least starve." Aswini Kumar, realising that the man was so much loved by Paramahansa, replied that Naren could not starve. Thakur's fears and anxieties were instantly gone and he said to Aswini Kumar, "When you assured me so certainly, he will not starve." Aswini Kumar had not yet met Naren, but had only heard of him. He was not there on that day, and so Aswini Kumar could not meet him. Thakur's intense love and high regard for Naren greatly surprised Aswini Kumar who now became very eager to meet such a man.

### FIRST MEETING OF ASWINI KUMAR WITH NAREN

On another day, as directed by Thakur, Aswini Kumar went to Ram Dutt's house in Calcutta. A spiritual discourse was going on. Thakur was getting intermittently listless—the signs of a trance—and muttering low "Why is he not come? Can't go every day." Perhaps he was speaking to his Mother. Just at that time, a young man with big sparkling eyes and dishevelled hair, stepped in with the rush of a hurricane and sat very close to Paramahansa. All conversation stopped, silence followed. Thakur was in a trance. It was off after some time. He was then finding this young man touching his lower lips—an extraordinary sight indeed. Love was pouring out of Thakur's whole heart. He then calmly spoke to the young man, "Why didn't you come so long? Thou

\*A translation of an article that appeared in the Aswini Kumar Number of *Barisal*, a Bengali monthly.

†Sri Ramakrishna.

‡Sri Ramakrishna.

art very cruel, I am restless without thee. Thou art my husband;" then pointing to Aswini Kumar, he said, "Narendra, do you know him—Aswini, the son of our 'Sadarwalla' (late Brojo Mohan Dutt, Small Cause Court Judge)? Speak to him." Needless to say, at the first glance, Aswini Kumar took this young man to be no other than Narendra, as if a voice told him so from within. Then both Narendra and Aswini Kumar left the place for speaking to each other, but as Narendra had a bad headache he could not speak much. On Aswini Kumar's return to the room, Thakur asked him, "Well, did you speak to him? Just fancy, in Keshab one sun shines, but eighteen in Narendra...."

#### MEETS VIVEKANANDA AT ALMORA

For various reasons Aswini Kumar had not the opportunity of meeting Narendra any more, but he met Vivekananda. It was at Almora. Aswini Kumar was told by his local cook of a curious 'jabardast' Bengali 'Sadhu' riding a horse, speaking English. He also learnt from papers that Vivekananda had been staying there after his conquests in the West and awakening the country from one end to the other. Aswini Kumar went out to meet the 'Hindu warrior.' Nobody could give him any direction. He enquired of the Bengali 'Sadhu.' A passer-by surprisingly said, "You mean the rider 'Sadhu?' There he is on horse-back, that's his house, sir....." Aswini Kumar saw from a distance that as soon as the 'Sannyasi,' clad in saffron, reached the bungalow-gate, a European helped him in dismounting, holding the reins of the horse. Aswini Kumar, a minute or two after, enquired at the door "Is Naren Dutt here?" A young Bengali "Sannyasi" answered in disgust, "No, Sir. There is no such Naren Dutt, he is dead long ago but here is Swami Vivekananda." Aswini Kumar again said, "I don't want your Swami Vivekananda. I want Paramahansa Dev's Naren Dutt, please tell me, if he is here." Kumar of course readily understood that the young man was a new disciple of the Swami. This conversation at the door reached the Swami's ears. He at once sent for his disciple who replying his Guru said, "A gentleman is enquiring of Naren Dutt—Paramahansa Dev's Naren." I said, "He is dead long ago but you may see Swami Vivekananda." The Swami cried out "Oh what a hell! Shew him in at once." Accordingly Aswini Kumar got in but he was thrilled with joy at what he had seen there. Since one hundred and fifty years the Bengalee has been under the heels

of 'Sahibs'; one of them (as Aswini Kumar found) was now unlacing the boots of a Bengali 'fakir,' another fanning him. Truly Aswini Kumar gloried in it, quite undreamt of ! The Swami was seated in an easy chair. Seeing Aswini Kumar he sprang up and cordially greeted him. Aswin Kumar said "Thakur asked me once to speak to his dear Narendra but not being well he could not speak to me much on that occasion. A decade passed by. I am meeting that Narendra now. Thakur's words cannot turn false." The Swami in reply sincerely apologised for not being able to speak much with Aswini Kumar on that day. But Aswini Kumar was apprehending that the Swami who had lately received tremendous ovations from all quarters and met him for a few moments at Dakshineswar twelve years ago might not recognise him. Soon his apprehensions proved groundless.

When Aswini Kumar addressed him 'Swami,' the Swami interrupting him replied "What's that ! Am I a Swami to you ? I'm still that Narendra—the name given to me by Thakur. Kindly address me as such. I am a servant of the servants of Thakur's disciples. Thakur is the crown of my head.

Aswini Kumar—"Well, you made a world tour infusing religion into millions of hearts. Tell me now which way India's salvation lies."

The Swami—"I have nothing new to add. What you have heard from Thakur is the same advice—Religion is bread to our bones, all reforms must come through it, else the mass will not accept them. If you want to do otherwise, it will be as trying to turn the tide of the Ganges and let her flow from the Himalayas in a different channel."

A. K.—"Haven't you any faith in what the Congress is doing ?"

S.—"No good out of evil, thus far. Let the country be awakened in different directions. Can you tell me what the Congress has been doing for the mass ? Do you think mere passing of a few resolutions there will bring freedom for you ? I have no faith in that. The mass is to be awakened. Let those people have full stomach and then they will work out their own salvation. If the Congress does anything for them I have sympathy. The virtues of Englishmen must also be acquired."

## RELIGION OF SAKTI OR ENERGY

A. K.—“Is it any special kind of religion referred to by you ?”

S.—“Has Thakur referred to any special religion ? The ‘Vedanta’ includes all. Thakur mentioned it. I also preach it. But the creed of my religion is Energy. The religion that does not infuse energy I do not care for, let it be the Upanishads, Gita or Bhagavat. Energy is Religion. I understand nothing greater than Energy.”

A. K.—“Advice me what to do.”

S.—“I understand you founded a school and a college. That’s real work. A greater virtue is in you, the gift of knowledge is a great gift. But educate the masses from village to village and the next thing is—the foundation of character. Build the character of your students like thunder. India’s salvation lies in the strength of character of the Bengali youths. Just give me a few of your students, let me shake the world. Mind, where there will be Radha-Krishna ‘kirtans,’ whip right and left. The country is gone to rack and ruin. There is not the slightest self-control—our countrymen indulge in such “kirtans.” Is it a deception ? Since long we have had three “kirtans”, stop them now. Let vigour, energy come into the country. And tell the untouchables, the cobblers, sweepers, ‘you are the life of the nation, boundless energy is in you. You can topsy-turvy the world. Be up. Let the world get a shock. You should also found schools for them and let them have sacred threads.”

## RIGHT TO PREACH THE VEDAS

Breakfast was ready. Aswini Kumar just before leaving asked the Swami, “Is it true that when the Madras Brahmins called you a Sudra with no right to preach the Vedas, you said, ‘If I am a Sudra, then, ye, Brahmins of Madras are the Pariahs of the Pariahs?’ ”

S.—“Yes.”

T. K. “Was it becoming you as a religious reformer possessing self-control?”

S.—“Who says so ? I do not say I was right. The impudence of those people upset me and in a fit of temper these words came out of my lips. What could I do ? But did I do right ?”

Aswini Kumar then embraced the Swami and said, "To-day you are higher in my estimation. I now realise how you could be a world-conqueror and why Thakur loved you so much."

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**I**T was Friday, 11th September, 1925, and the birthday anniversary of Swami Abhedananda at the Ramakrishna Vedanta Society, 40. Beadon Street, Calcutta. There was a large gathering of devotees in the hall and at about 3 P. M. Mr. M. (the author of the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna) came and after greetings, he took his seat by the side of the Swami Abhedananda. The Swami enquired about his health and then Mr. Amritalal Bose requested Mr. M. to relate some incidents connected with the life of the Swami. The Swami just then intervened and requested M. to speak something about Sri Ramakrishna and said :—

“When the Swami Vivekananda returned from the West for the first time he was received with great enthusiasm by the people of Calcutta in the Town Hall. I was then in America and perhaps, Master Mahashay (M.), you were present at the meeting. In that meeting Swami Vivekananda said, ‘You have received me with great ovation, but you do not know to whom all the credit is due. First of all try to understand what my Guru, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa was. Taking a handful of dust from the streets of Calcutta and blowing it out, he could produce, if he wished, thousands of Vivekanandas. So great was he.’ This shows what amount of *bhakti* Swami Vivekananda had for his Guru. There is another instance to show how great a Gurubhakta Swami Vivekananda was. Throughout his stay in the West he never mentioned the name of Sri Ramakrishna in any of his lectures but would only say ‘My Master,’ because he thought that by doing so he would belittle such a great personality. I too did the same in the beginning ; but afterwards introduced Sri Ramakrishna through the ‘Life of a Divine Man.’ That lecture has not yet been published. Throughout my stay in the West I used to observe the Birthday Anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna. I would fast the whole day, make special puja in the morning, recite Chandi, and deliver three lectures one in the morning, one in the afternoon and another in the evening and distribute prasad. The prasad consisted of various kinds of fruits, candy, biscuits, etc., which the Westerners generally like. Afterwards the birthday was observed in both the Centres, New York and San Francisco.

The Vedanta Society of New York used to celebrate the Society's anniversary and also Swami Vivekananda's birthday. I amalgamated these two into one.

*Master Mahasay* :—When did you first meet Thakur (meaning Sri Ramakrishna) ? Before or after passing the Entrance Examination ? ”

*The Swami* : “I saw him before passing the examination. I remember it was in the month of February, 1884. Prior to this time I attended the lectures of Pandit Sasadhar Tarka Chudamani, and the idea of practising Yoga was implanted in me. I then went to him personally to study Patanjala Darsan, but being unable to satisfy me, he sent me to Kalibara Vedanta Bagish with whom I studied Patanjala Darsan and Shiva Samhita. I read the Bhagavad Gita myself as I had the English translation. These books again insisted upon the need of a qualified Guru to practise Yoga. But where am I to find such a Guru ? Except Yagneswara Bhattacharya to whom could I communicate all my feelings ? When I expressed my desire to him, he said: ‘There is a *Siddha Yogi* Paramahansa at the Rani Rasmani's Kali Temple at Dakshineswar, and I think he will be able to fulfil your desire.’

“Then one day taking a morning walk along the Chitpore Road, I found I had reached the Bagbazar bridge. Then a thought came that I might go to Dakshineswar to see that Paramahansa Dev. Thinking that Dakshineswar was not far off from Bagbazar I proceeded. But I took the wrong road and got lost and at last when I arrived at Dakshineswar I found myself completely exhausted. On enquiring I was informed that Sri Ramakrishna had gone to Calcutta. I was quite disappointed, for I had walked such a long distance for nothing, and I was also too much fatigued. I had no means of returning to Calcutta in the noon, nor had I any money wherewith to appease my hunger. Sitting in a corner of the temple I was brooding over my sad fate.

“Just then, to my good luck, Soshi (Swami Ramakrishnananda) arrived there to see Sri Ramakrishna. Perhaps this was his second or third visit to Sri Ramakrishna. Not finding him, he entered into a conversation with me. I told him about my condition. He consoled me and persuaded me to stay there. Afterwards we bathed in the Ganges and took prasad of Mother Kali.

"Late in the evening, as Sri Ramakrishna had not still returned, I was about to leave Dakshineswar, but Soshi assured me of his coming back in the night, as it was not usual with Sri Ramakrishna to stay away at night. This was the first occasion I got out of house without my parents' knowledge and therefore was all the more anxious to be back home as early as possible. I fell into a reverie. My idea of a Paramahansa was a person with matted hair, long beard, ash-clad body with a pair of tongs in his hands. I was thinking how I shall salute and open conversation with him. I did not know what the formality was. I was overcome with a feeling of awe.

"At about 10 o'clock in the night Sri Ramakrishna returned and entered his room uttering the name of the Divine Mother three times, Kali Kali Kali. And my name was Kali, and I was thinking what a strange coincidence ! He took his seat on the small bedstead. Latu (Swami Adbhutananda) was with him. Soshi went in to salute him and I was standing outside the room near the door.

"Ramlal Dada told Sri Ramakrishna : 'A young boy came to see you in the morning and has been waiting the whole day. Would you like to see him?'

"*Sri Ramakrishna* : 'Yes, call him.'

"At that time my mind became almost blank and I was trembling with that feeling of awe. As I entered the room Paramahansa Dev asked me to sit down on the mat that was spread on the floor. When I sat down after saluting him, he asked me several questions about who I was, where I lived and so on. After looking at me from head to foot, he said, 'Now it is getting too late in the night, go and retire. I will speak to you to-morrow morning.' Then I went out and stayed with Soshi and Ramlal Dada in the verandah where they used to sleep. That was all for that night.

"Early in the morning when he was up, I went to his room and saluted him, and then he was very kind. I asked him, 'Sir, I wish to practise Yoga. Can you teach me?'

"*He said* : 'You were a great Yogi in your previous incarnation. There was a little that was not finished. In this life that will be completed, as this is your last birth.'

"Then he asked me what books I read. I told him that I was reading Gita, Shiva Samhita and Patanjala Darsan. Then he asked me if I could understand Sanskrit. I said, Yes.

Then he asked me whether I wanted to marry. I said, No and he was very pleased and asked me not to marry.

"Then came my initiation. He called me to come to the verandah on the north side of his room. There was a small wooden cot. As I went there he asked me to sit on that cot in Yoga posture. Then he asked me to open my mouth and put out my tongue. And he wrote the Bija Mantram on my tongue with his finger and asked me to meditate. I felt queer as if the whole cosmic existence was melting away. I lost all external consciousness and was deeply absorbed in meditation. I sat motionless like a statue. I did not know what happened afterwards nor how far I remained in that state of superconsciousness. After a long time he put his hand on my chest and awakened me as if from deep sleep. Then he gave me the instructions. I remember a song from Rama Prasad which he sang then :—

*Suchi asuchireyloyey divyagharey kobey subi . . . . .*

(When you have seen the underlying sameness among all things good and bad, thou shalt have the vision of the Divine Mother.)

"From the very beginning he gave me the instructions of Adwaita. After some more talks he asked me to go to the temple and pray to Mother Kali.

"He told me to relate to him whatever I saw in my meditation. After some time when I used to meditate I saw many things,—all the Devas and Devis. I used to have visions. Once I had the vision of the Omnipresent Eye and many other visions I saw besides.

"About this time somebody came from Calcutta in a hackney carriage and as I was anxious to come home, Sri Ramakrishna put me in that carriage and paid my fare to come back to Calcutta as I had nothing with me. He asked me to go to him as often as possible. I used to repeat my visits to him which afterwards became very frequent. Then I used to stay one or two days with him, and afterwards managed to live with him till his Maha-Samadhi.

"I was the youngest of all his disciples and was about 17 years when I first saw Him."

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## INITIATION AND ILLUMINATION\*

SWAMI RAGHAVANANDA

**I**N every science or branch of learning we get some help from those who have been before us. We cannot spring without any past straight from the earth like plutonic rocks. We have to take advantage of the accumulated wisdom of those who have struggled with those very problems which face us, and who have found some solution to them.

These problems are not new. They have been faced ever since mankind has been on this earth, and therefore it would be the height of folly for us to disregard such helps, and to say that we shall work from the very beginning, find out the past, and know unaided all that is to be known. It cannot be done ! Because we have to work on the basis of the past. That is what is meant by education. Education means using the accumulated knowledge of mankind.

So, we find a young American boy to-day learning in a few years what took his ancestors centuries to learn. That is because of education and educators. This mass of knowledge is ready for him and he has to assimilate it, and pass through it rapidly, whereas mankind has risen slowly from a lower state to a higher state.

The same is true of religion. There is nothing new in religion. It is the old truths that have to be lived over again, and thought over again, and we have to assimilate the thought, and then we shall come to the goal which the ancients attained. Help from another person is very necessary, because actual living religion is something which affects our lives, it changes our whole nature, and it is not a question of information from study of books, or being able to talk in polished phrases, but it is the moulding of our lives in complete conformity with certain truths, so that our conduct in life and the reactions of life are completely changed. It cannot be achieved by the study of books—that is only secondary, but the real thing is what is transmitted as a seed of spiritual power from one living personality to another. Life only can communicate life. Life only can stimulate life. Books and theories can

\*Notes of a class-talk given by the Swami in the Vedanta Society, New York, U. S. A.

never stimulate our religious life, but a person who has realized these truths and has embodied them in his own life, he can do this for us. He makes the scriptures living for us.

So, however modern it may be to say there is no need of a teacher in religion, for our soul to rise in union with God, when we come to practical life, to common sense, we find that just as we get help in intellectual studies and other accomplishments from those who went before us, so also in a hundred degrees more, we are helped in our spiritual life, and therefore there is a need for a teacher; and this relation between teacher and disciple must be an actual give and take. Not in words, but it is something real which the teacher must have the power to communicate to his disciple. The teacher must know that something is going out of him, and the disciple must feel that he is receiving something.

There is the necessity of the teacher. What are the qualifications of this teacher? Not everybody can be a teacher of religion, because in order to teach, one must have something to give. One must have lived and accumulated something in order to be able to distribute it.

The first part of the life is spent in the accumulation of love, of spirituality, in meditation, and in contemplation upon the spiritual truths; and when after these years of practice and introspection, he has accumulated something, then is he fit to distribute his hard-earned truth of spirituality.

The teacher must have these qualifications, and here we find a mention of them in the Scriptures: "He must be a knower of the Scriptures, and sinless, and unsmitten by desire."

These are the qualifications we have to look for in the teacher of spirituality and if they are present we can expect to learn something from him. If these are absent, not only can he not teach us, but there is a danger of his conveying something undesirable in our lives. We do not have to look for character in the teacher of other subjects, but in the matter of religion, in order to teach anything in religion, the teacher has to communicate something to the disciple, and therefore he must be pure in character.

There can be no vision of God, and the perception of truth, until the soul is pure. We have to see if he is pure, and if he knows the Scriptures. By knowledge of the Scriptures is meant the spirit of the Scripture. The teacher who is taken up with the words of Scripture, and not its spirit, misses

the meaning of the Scripture, and the words of the Scripture are a veritable forest in which the human mind is apt to get lost, unless under the guidance of a teacher. A knowledge of the spirit of the Scripture is therefore necessary. It is not necessary for the teacher to be able to talk in polished terms, etc., but he must know the spiritual experiences himself, and then he is to be estimated as a very valuable teacher, as one who can really give us something.

A man may be highly intellectual and learned in all the philosophies of the world, and yet if he has no perception of the truth, he is of no use to us as a teacher. He must be able to give us an insight into the real things of religion, the deep and mysterious things in spiritual life.

"He must be a knower of the Scriptures, and sinless, and unsmitten by desire." He must teach without any desire for name, or fame, not even with the idea of gratitude from the taught but simply to help, and to guide souls who have lost themselves in the midst of worldly existence, back to the truths ! Unselfish love is the only medium by which spirituality can be transmitted. For no other medium can communicate the truths of spirituality. If there is a desire for material gain, then nothing can be gained ! The teacher must therefore teach the truth for truth's sake.

What are the conditions which we must look for in the taught ? They are purity, perseverance and a thirst for knowledge. These three things he must bring with him. He must be thirsty for knowledge. When the mind has become unsatisfied with the things of this life, and has seen through them all, and wants something more, something more permanent, then this awakening has come. This continued desire of the mind to know something of the mysteries of life, and solve the riddle of life and death, and the continuous grappling with everything that hinders us, that is the sign of awakening !

This intense longing for liberation is so rare, and comes only, as we say in our Scriptures, as a result of great good fortune : " These are very rare to attain : birth in a human body, the desire for liberation, and the guidance and company of a great soul."

When we have these three conditions, then we shall attain to the goal.

When this awakening has come, we are ready for initiation, and it remains and works in our deep spiritual life as a seed of spiritual power. In the Hindu fable the pearl oyster remains at the bottom of the ocean, and only comes when drops of rain-water fall, and opens its shell and remains in expectancy, until a drop of rainwater falls into it, and then it dives deep down in the water and remains there until it has succeeded in fashioning a pearl.

In "initiation", the taught comes to his particular line of worship, and with that he goes deep down in the ocean of spiritual practice, and struggles with it and works with it until he succeeds in fashioning a pearl of realisation out of this. Therefore, there is the necessity of this "initiation." Every one of us has a particular line of growth, a particular past which we have been, and one particular type of character which determines our way of approach to God. That is peculiar to us. Every one of us cannot look upon God in one and the same aspect : some like to look at him this way, and others another way ; all persons cannot be herded together in one particular form of worship of God.

Therefore there are so many different ways of approaching God. We cannot prescribe one way for all, because our constitutions are different, and our pasts have been different. One person may look upon God as a Judge, one looks upon him as a brother, another a mother, or a father, or a friend. All these different ways are different approaches to God, and they must be given full development.

Trying to force people by public opinion and the like into one belief of God, which does not suit them all alike, resulted in the fact that so many of us go to hear religion and do not feel satisfied because we do not find something that is suited to us. Each one of us has his own particular worship of God in the way he loves to think of God.

The teacher knows, by his association with the disciple, his particular type of mind, and then the teacher gives him a form of worship best suited to him. And with that the disciple begins to work. This teacher usually gives him a formula—some words of texts which represent some particular aspect of divine thought. The disciple, with the particular formula suitable to him, works at it, and meditates and contemplates until his whole soul becomes full with the idea of God. The idea becomes a reality to him whereas before it was only a

combination of a few words to him, now it means so much more to him. And this brings out all his hidden powers. That is what happens by this "initiation" and this particular form of practice.

All the powers that are latent in us come up to the surface. We say that the person who has become perfect is "awakened," that is, God is not merely a word to him, but He is a tremendous reality. He has brought life where there was only lifelessness. The intelligence that is within him has become awakened. The greatest blessing which the teacher gives to the disciple is "May your intelligence be awakened!"

Then that which appeared to you before as lifeless, has become living, and the whole universe becomes illumined in the light of this enlightenment, and you see deeper meanings in life. You come to look upon the universe in a different way. You do not see trees, and houses, and rivers but you begin to see the spirit everywhere.

Thus "initiation" results in illumination, but in order that it should result in illumination there must be sincere belief in thought. Sometimes it comes quickly, and sometimes the hindrances are tremendous. All sorts of things that we have done previously—not in this life alone, but also those before this—have created a stain in our mind, and until this is wiped off, the enlightenment behind will not become manifest.

We must have faith, and we must be ready to wait for a long time to receive the truth. When the mind becomes awakened, all sorts of psychic manifestations come. All these psychic manifestations appear, and we know that our inner spiritual intelligence is getting awakened. There is a continuous growth of truth going on in the back of our mind, and the river of our life begins to flow into the ocean of the existence of God. The mind being filled with sacred thoughts, forms of truth are visualised by the inner eye, voices of truth are heard by the inner ear, sometimes words of truth are seen inscribed in brilliance. The mind feels strengthened and assured of our destiny and of the truth that is at the back of our nature.

There is a great intimate relation between the teacher and the person taught. We are born in the line of our teacher's spirituality. Our mother and father gave us this physical body, but our spiritual birth is from our teacher.

It is not that one cannot at all attain knowledge of God without external help but it is foolish to disregard the help

which is ready for us. Those who have been blessed in finding a teacher who has really taught them and opened their eyes, their spiritual eyes, who feel that they are grateful to their teacher, and that they have found something in their life that was not there before—certainly they cannot say the help of this teacher is something slight, and that they can as well do without.

The relation of the taught to the teacher must be one of love, faith, humility, and reverence. You must look upon the teacher from whose mouth words of truth and God come, with reverence, because he stands as the representative of these truths.

The real teacher is the Supreme Spirit, the Infinite Existence—Knowledge—Bliss. He is the One Absolute Teacher, all teachers being his embodied manifestations for the seeking devotee, centres where He has cast aside the veil, the media or the openings as it were, through which His divine qualities such as love, mercy, knowledge, power, and freedom flow out into this world of manifestation.

We must therefore approach religion and the teacher of spirituality in a spirit of reverence, and if you bring it down as a matter for social functions, lectures, institutions, etc., it is making light of religion which is the greatest of blasphemies. It cannot be had in assemblage. It is my relation with God, it is sacred. It is to be understood and realized within myself. Therefore the inner teachings must remain with myself and my teacher.

All these various formalities of religion have made a mockery of it. To attain to God we have to dive deep within ourselves, we have to remain at the bottom of the ocean of our heart in order to fashion the "pearl" of spirituality. Real, genuine religion is always a personal thing and it can never be taught in public.

We must see that our teacher is competent to teach, and then we must open our heart to his influence in faith. We must have immense faith in the teacher.

We have to see God everywhere; that is the ultimate goal. Let us therefore begin by seeing Him in one place where He is manifest. The mind of the disciple concentrates upon the personality of the teacher, and he no longer looks upon him outwardly as a human being, but feels that his (the teacher's) heart is a temple of God, and within that

temple is seated, his particular form of God. His mind concentrates upon the Divine in the teacher and he comes to know the greater truths that the God of Truth reveals to him.

In this way, if we approach the facts of religion, with intense desire to learn, and to approach the truth, with a supreme reverence to the teachers, then the highest form of religion becomes manifest to us, and God opens the door to the greatest truths that have been shown to mankind. Initiation leads to Illumination and with Illumination comes the realization that

My Self is the Self of the Universe,  
 My God is the God of the Universe,  
 My Teacher is the Teacher of the Universe.

The illumined one no longer worships any particular form of God, nor does he see his particular teacher nor his particular aspect of the Universe. Then remains only the One without a second, the Deity, the devotee, the Teacher and the universe all merged in that One.

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## ADWAITA\*

K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRI, B. A., B. L.

**A** DWAITA means non-duality or Oneness. What a bold affirmation ! The manifoldness of things is affirmed by the senses. Yet Adwaita steps in and declares just the contrary. This seems to take our breath away. As Sri Vidyaranya says in his famous *Panchadasi*:

मग्नस्याब्धौ यथाक्षाणि विह्वलानि तथास्यधीः ।

अखंडैकरसं श्रुत्वा निष्प्रचारा बिभेयतः ॥

(Just as in the case of a man immersed in the ocean, his senses are in a state of desperate trepidation, even so the mind, learning about the Infinite and Undifferentiated sweetness of That and finding nothing to grasp objectively, is scared by That).

But what on the other hand is the mental relation to the manifoldness of things in the case of the man who has realised the central unity? Let Bhartrihari answer:

मातर्मेदिनि तातमारुत सखेतेजः सुबन्धोजल

भ्रातर्व्योम निबद्धएव भवतामन्त्यः प्रणामांजलिः ।

युष्मत्संग वशोपघात सुकृत स्फारस्फुरन्निर्मल

ज्ञानापास्त समस्त मोहमहिमा लीयेपरब्रह्मणि ॥

"O Mother Earth! O Father Wind! O Friend Fire! O Kindred Water! O Brother Sky! Accept my last salutation. I have overcome and dispelled the power of the entirety of wrong knowledge with the aid of pure knowledge which shines with limitless glory and which is the result of purity and merit caused by my contact with you. I am entering into perfect oneness with the Para Brahman."

Let me show at the very outset that such Adwaitic realisation is not a random shot of the over-speculative Indian mind but is also the acme of the realised and uttered inner spiritual experience of the best minds of the West. Wordsworth says about one of his rich and rare experiences thus: "I was often unable to think of external things as having external existence, and I communed with all that I saw as something not apart

\*A paper read at the Universal Religious Conference held at Madras in January, 1926, under the auspices of the Satchidananda Sangha.

from, but inherent in, my own immaterial nature. Many times while going to school have I grasped at a wall or tree to recall myself from this abyss of idealism to the reality. . . . . There was a time in my life when I had to push against something that resisted, to be sure that there was anything outside of me. I was sure of my own mind; *everything else fell away and vanished into thought.*" He speaks of occasions and experiences when

"The gross and visible frame of things  
Relinquishes its hold upon the sense,  
Yea, almost, on the mind itself and seems  
All unsubstantiated."

Shelley sings in his *Adonais*:

"The One remains, the many change and pass,  
Heaven's Light for ever shines, Earth's shadows fly;  
Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass  
Stains the white radiance of Eternity  
Until Death tramples it into fragments."

"That Light whose smile kindles the Universe,  
That Beauty in which all things work and move,  
That Benediction which the eclipsing course  
Of birth can quench not, that sustaining Love  
Which through the web of being blindly wove  
By man and beast and earth and air and sea,  
Burns bright or dim, as each are mirrors of  
The fire for which all thirst, now beams on me  
Consuming the last clouds of cold mortality."

Tennyson says thus in his well-known poem on *The Ancient Sage*:

"For more than once when I  
Sat all alone, revolving in myself  
The world that is the symbol of myself,  
The mortal limit of the Self was loosed,  
And past into the Nameless, as a cloud  
Melts into Heaven. I touch'd my limbs, the limbs  
Were strange not mine—and yet no shade of doubt  
But utter clearness, and through loss of self  
The gain of such large life as matched with ours  
Were Sun to spark—unshadowable in words,  
Themselves but shadows of a shadow-world."

If this is not Adwaita, what else is it?

This Adwaita realisation was born in India and was given to the world in India. Why was it so? Says Swami

Vivekananda, "There is another type in Asia. Think of that vast, huge continent, whose mountain-tops go beyond the clouds, almost touching the canopy of heaven's blue; a rolling desert of miles upon miles, where a drop of water cannot be found, neither will a blade of grass grow; interminable forests and rivers rushing into the sea. In the midst of all these surroundings, the Oriental's love of the beautiful and of the sublime developed itself in another direction. It looked inside and not outside. . . . In Asia even to-day, birth or colour or language never makes a race. That which makes a race is its religion. . . . And then again, the Oriental, for the same reason, is a visionary, a born dreamer. The ripples of the waterfalls, the songs of the birds, the beauties of the sun and the moon and the stars and the whole earth, are pleasant enough; but they are not sufficient for the Oriental's mind. He wants to dream a dream beyond. He wants to go beyond the present. The present, as it were, is nothing to him." Coupled with this outward pressure of the environment was the inward and upward surge of the Hindu spirit. The special and peculiar inner gift of the Hindu people is its faculty of insight and intuition. Mr. H. H. Chamberlain says well: "The Indians began to think before the Greeks and their thought was profounder and more consistent, and in their various systems they have exhausted more possibilities." It is this rich and rare combination of inner endowment and outer environment that was the cause of the manifestation in India of the apex of all human thought—the Adwaita system.

Let me now briefly trace the history of the rise and growth of Adwaita in India. He who runs may read its growth during the ages, as the phenomenon is the most noteworthy and persistent of all the intellectual and spiritual phenomena of India. There are none so blind as will not see. We may enroll ourselves as the camp-followers of this or that Acharya or spiritual leader. Each of us may have a special bias for work or meditation or devotion or thought. But if, eliminating all these disturbing factors, we try to trace the development of Indian thought, the one outstanding feature is the persistent surge and forward rush of the Gangetic flood of Adwaita thought through the ages. It came down from the eternal snow-clad heights of the Himalayas of the Mantras and the Upanishads:

एकसद्विप्रा बहुधावदन्ति  
 एकमेवाद्वितीयम् ।  
 शान्तं शिवमद्वैतम् ।  
 स देवसौम्य इदमग्र आसीत् ।  
 प्रज्ञानं ब्रह्म ।  
 अहं ब्रह्मास्मि ।  
 तत्त्वमसि ।  
 अयमात्मा ब्रह्म ।

The Gangetic flood of Adwaitic thought then poured down into the plains. It was handed down by Narayana to Brahma and by Brahma to Vasishta. The *Yoga Vasishta* is perhaps the most spacious exposition of the Adwaita doctrine and realisation. The stories in it are among the most valuable and convincing in the world. One of the most beautiful declarations of the Adwaitic realisation is in the well-known verse.

दिक्कालाद्यनवच्छिन्नानन्तचिन्मात्रमूर्तयं ।  
 स्वानुभूत्यैकमानाय नमः शान्ताय तेजसे ॥

Let me quote a few more wonderful verses here:

अज्ञस्य दुःखौघमयं ज्ञस्यानन्दमयं जगत् ।  
 अन्धं भुवनमन्धस्य प्रकाशंतु सचक्षुषः ॥  
 अनन्ते चिद्घनानन्दे निर्विकल्पैकस्वरूपिणि ।  
 स्थितेद्वितीयता भावात् कोबन्धः कश्च मुच्यते ॥  
 निस्तरगो निगंभीरः सान्द्रानन्द सुधार्णवः ।  
 माधुर्यैकरसाधार एक एवास्ति सर्वतः ॥  
 समस्तमेव ब्रह्मेति भावितो ब्रह्मैषुमान् ।  
 पीतेऽमृतेऽमृतमयो कोनाम न भवेदिति ॥

The Adwaita Ganga then came down through Sakti and Parasara to Vyasa. It is through Vyasa that it issues into the plains as it issues at Haridwar. Vyasa is the Haridwar of the Adwaita Ganga. I know that Vyasa's *Brahma Sutras* have been claimed by all the various schools of Indian thought as the source of their systems. But as the author of *Vyasa Tatparya Niruaya* rightly points out, when other *rishis* attacked Vyasa's doctrine, they criticised it on the footing of its being Adwaita. Though Vyasa in his *Puranas* and *Bharata* laid truly and well the foundations of the Indian faith, the top-

most storey of that palace of Indian thought is certainly the Adwaita. In the words of Suka, Vyasa's great son, the Adwaita rushes in a pure and pellucid stream. He shows that fusion point where in supreme love the distinction of soul and Over-soul vanishes in bliss.

प्रेमातिभरनिर्मिन्न पुलकांगोऽतिनिर्वृतः ।

आनन्दसंल्लवे लीनोनापश्यमुभयं मुने ॥

In the *Sukarahasyopanishad* we learn that Vyasa took Suka to Lord Siva for initiation in spiritual truth. Lord Siva replied :

“मयोपदिष्टे कैवल्ये साक्षाद्ब्रह्मणि शाश्वते ।

विहाय पुत्रो निर्वेदात्प्रकाशे यास्यति स्वयम् ॥

(If I teach the innermost and unique realisation of the One and Infinite and eternal Brahma, your son will renounce everything in a mood of dispassion and go all alone into the Infinite and Eternal Light).

But Vyasa pressed Lord Siva to teach Suka. Lord Siva then did so. What happened then ? What a master and what a disciple ! The Upanishad says :

नित्यानन्दं परम सुखदं केवलं ज्ञानमूर्तिं

विश्वातीतंगगनसदृशं तत्त्वमस्यादिलक्ष्यं ।

एकं नित्यं विमलमचलं सर्वधी साक्षिभूतं

भावातीतं त्रिगुण रहितं सद्गुरुं त्वां नमामि ॥

What became of the disciple ? The Upanishad says :

उपदिष्टः शिवेनेति जगत्तन्मयतां गतः ।

उत्थाय प्रणिपत्येशं त्यक्ताशेषपरिग्रहः ॥ —

परब्रह्मपयोराशौ प्लवन्निव ययौ तदा ।

प्रव्रजन्तं तमालोक्य कृष्णद्वैपायनोमुनिः ॥

अनुव्रजन्नाजुहाव पुत्रविश्लेषकातरः ।

प्रतिनेदुस्तदासर्वं जगत्स्थायवरजंगमे ॥

तच्छ्रुत्वा सकलाकारं व्यासः सत्यवतीसुतः ।

पुत्रेणसहितः प्रीत्या परानन्दमुपेयिवान् ॥

योरहस्योपनिषदमधीते गुर्वनुग्रहात् ।

सर्वपापविनिर्मुक्तः साक्षात्कैवल्यमश्नुते

साक्षात्कैवल्यमश्नुते इत्युपनिषत् ॥

Thus Sri Suka realised the Universal Soul at once and went filled with the nectar of the supreme realisation. He learnt the truth from Lord Siva and revealed the glories of Lord Vishnu. He learnt Truth as Jnana and uttered it as Bhakthi, just as the water is drawn as vapour and showered forth as rain. He went to King Janaka and learnt Truth from him also. If Suka's life and words do not show the unity of Lord Vishnu and Lord Siva and the unity of the statue of Adwaitic Jnana and its pedestal of Karma and Bhakthi, then we shall never learn such unity from less pure and less inspired lips.

The Adwaita Ganga then came down through Gouda-Pada and Govinda to Sri Sankaracharya. We see in him the Ganga at Kasi. He is the *Kasi* (Benares) of the Adwaita Ganga. For was he not the Lord Visweswara Himself incarnated as a man? His disciples contributed their tributary streams of thought to the Ganga of his doctrine. Sankara's works form the *avimuktakshetra*, the heart-point, of the entire body of Adwaita doctrine. From him the life-stream radiates to the very uttermost extremities and courses back to the centre for new richness and power. Well has Vachaspathi called his *Bhashya* प्रमत्तगोपीर —clear and deep, a term that can be as appositely applied to Sankara's utterances as to Ganga herself.

If we trace the course of the stream of Adwaita beyond Sankara who is the Adwaita Kasi, we find it fertilising spacious forests and plains of thought in Vidyananya and breaking up finally into many meandering streams till it fulfills itself in Madhusoodana's Adwaita Siddhi and enters the sea of Brahmananda. In later years Appayya Dikshita summed up the entirety of Adwaitism in his luminous and voluminous works. In Tamil we find the Adwaita at its sweetest and highest in Tiruvachakam and Thayumanavar's songs a translation of one of which reads thus:—

"Let us adore that Deity Whom the precious Vedas proclaim as Truth Absolute without a second, Who is self-effulgent and is the Self of all selves, Who is the bliss itself and is the source of everything, Who is oneness itself and has no beginning, Whose nature being beyond the pale of all religions is one of non-dependence, Who is full, beginningless and endless, Who is unique and inheres in all, Who is calmness itself and is eternal and pure, Who is beyond all worldly taints, senses and modifications, Who, being non-attached and unaffected shines as the inrunning thread of all, who though residing in every self as illumination is yet uncognised by the mind and Who exists in everybody's heart as the Supreme God of consciousness."

Such has been the history of the rise and growth of Adwaitism in India. It has permeated the entire culture of India through the Brahma Sutras, through the Gita and through Sankara's works. I did not discuss above the efflorescence of the Adwaita in the Gita. I will only briefly indicate it here. We find it especially in Chapters V and XIII of the Gita.

योऽन्तःसुखोऽन्तरारामस्तथान्तर्ज्योतिरेव यः ।

सयोगी ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं ब्रह्मभूतोऽधिगच्छति ॥

लभन्ते ब्रह्मनिर्वाणमृषयः क्षीणकल्मषाः ।

छिन्नद्वैधा यतात्मानः सर्वभूतहिते रताः ॥

कामक्रोध विमुक्तानां यतीनां यतचेतसां ।

अभितो ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं वर्तते विदितात्मनां ॥

(Ch. V)

अविभक्तं च भूतेषु विभक्तमिव च स्थितं ।

भूतभर्तृ च तद्भेद्यं प्रसिष्यु प्रभविष्यु च ॥

ज्योतिषामपि तज्ज्योतिस्तमसः परमुच्यते ।

ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं ज्ञानगम्यं हृदि सर्वस्य विष्ठितम् ॥

यदा भूतपृथग्भावमेकस्थमनुपश्यति ।

तत एव च विस्तारं ब्रह्म सम्पद्यते तदा ॥

अनादित्वान्निर्गुणत्वात्परमात्मायमव्ययः ।

शरीरस्थोऽपि कौन्तेय न करोति न लिप्यते ॥

यथा सर्वगतं सौक्ष्म्यादाकाशं नोपलिप्यते ।

सर्वत्रावस्थितो देहे तथाऽत्मा नोपलिप्यते ॥

यथा प्रकाशयत्येकः कृत्स्नं लोकमिमं रविः ।

क्षेत्रं क्षेत्री तथा कृत्स्नं प्रकाशयति भारत ॥

(Ch. XIII)

In the above verses we find all the essential elements and even the essential examples of Adwaita:—Inner realisation, bliss and glory (*Antassukha* and *Antarjyotiḥ*), becoming Brahma (*Brahma Bhuta*), the Brahmic moksha (*Brahma Nirvana*), the realisation of non-duality (*chhinna dwaidha*), Jivan mukti and Videhamukti (*Abhitah*), oneness of God and Jnani (*Jnanituaatmaiva*), everything being God (*Vasudevah Sarvam*), Para Brahma, Nirguna, the Supreme Light (*Jyotiḥshamapi tajjotiḥ*), oneness (*Ekaṣṭham*), infinite Brahma

(*Vistharam Brahma*), anadi, and Brahman being omnipresent like the ether and all-illuminating like the sun.

The Adwaita has not only inter-penetrated the entire cultural life of India but it has entered and vivified universal thought as well. It blossomed in Plato and Plotinus and especially in Neoplatonism. It inspired the mediæval mystics. It thrilled Schopenhauer into exclaiming: "In the whole world there is no study so beneficial and so elevating as that of the Upanishads. It has been the solace of my life; it will be the solace of my death." Schlegel says: "Even the loftiest philosophy of the European—the idealism of reason as it is set forth by the Greek philosophers—appears in comparison with the abundant light and vigour of oriental idealism like a feeble Promethean spark in the full flood of heavenly glory, faltering and feeble and ever ready to be extinguished." We know how the Adwaita appealed strongly to the minds of Max-Muller and Deussen. It permeated and vitalised the genius of Carlyle and Emerson and broke into tuneful utterance on the lips of Wordsworth and Shelley. We know how it was taken by the winged words of Swami Vivekananda and Rabindranath Tagore to the West and how it has been a powerful and formative influence there. In fact it is one of the world's great forces outside India.

If such is its operation and such its destiny abroad, its operation and destiny are bound to be even more wonderful in the land of its birth. India is to-day in the pangs of a new birth. In India we find a blend of many races and many religions, of many creeds and many cultures. India is the great laboratory of the future co-operative civilisation of the world. On the anvil of variety with the hammer of Adwaitic unity we must forge the new co-operative harmonious spiritual civilisation of the future. The Adwaita alone tolerates all levels of attainment and links them all to the vivifying and illuminating central unity. All other reconstructions are on the basis of carnivorous or cannibalistic reconstruction—the reconstruction of destruction and assimilation. In the Adwaita alone we find the reconstruction of combination into a higher unity, the reintegration of all the colours of the spectrum into the white light. In and through the Adwaita and the Adwaita alone, India will discover and realise and attain the wider and deeper and higher spiritual unity, from which and from which alone will come the reintegrated and perfect social and

industrial and political unity which will usher the dawn of a new era of peace and plenty and prosperity in India and through India's inspiration all over the world. I conceive such to be the mission of the Adwaita in India and the mission of India in the world.

Is the Adwaita system of thought consonant to human reason? That is the question which the reason-ridden modern mind asks and asks imperiously. What is the answer? The answer is certainly 'yes'. Sri Sankaracharya's works are a veritable mine of reasons and proofs in respect of Adwaita Vada. It will not be possible to go into all of them here but I may just indicate a bare outline of such ratiocination. In Sri Sankara's *Dasa Sloki* we have the argument presented in the clearest and simplest terms. It may be stated thus. Whatever we sense is impermanent. But the Atman which is the witness of all transient and fleeting phenomena is changeless and eternal. In dreamless sleep we reach the Atmic state but without being aware of the fact. The Atma is the witness of all the three states of being and is changeless and self-luminous. To quote from *Panchadasi*:

नोदेति नास्तमेत्येका संविदेकास्वयंप्रभा ।

(The Atman is pure, infinite, all pervasive, formless, self-evident, self-luminous Satchidananda).

But the real proof of the Adwaita is not in logic but in the Sruthi (*Scripture*) culminating in realisation. Sri Sankara is never tired of affirming this truth over and over again. He declares at the same time that *Anukoola Tarka* (reason in harmony with revelation) is an aid to Adwaitic realisation.

वाक्यार्थविचारणाध्यवसाय निर्वृत्ता हि ब्रह्माव-

गतिर्बानुमानादि प्रमाणान्तरनिर्वृत्ता । सत्सु

तु वेदान्तवाक्येषु जगतो जन्मादि कारणवादिषु ।

तद्गर्मग्रहण दार्ढ्य अनुमानामपि

वेदान्त वाक्याविरोधि प्रमाणं भवन्ननिवार्यते ।

श्रुत्येव च सहायत्वेन तर्कस्याभ्युपेतत्वात् ॥ *Brahma sutras* I. 2,  
He says again :—"अवगतिर्यन्तं ज्ञानं । ब्रह्मावगतिर्हि पुरुषार्थः (Do—I, 1).

There are some widely prevalent misconceptions regarding the Adwaita. One misconception is that it declares the world to be an illusion. Sri Sankara clearly declares the existence of three kinds of realities, viz., (1) *prathibhasika*

(*illusory*), (2) *Vyavaharika* (phenomenal or practical or pragmatic or relative) and (3) *Paramarthika* (noumenal or absolute). The existence of the world is neither an illusory reality nor is it a noumenal reality. It is a phenomenal or relative reality. The world is not an illusion but is a transient and relative and phenomenal fact. Sri Sankara expressly says that *Jnana* is *vasthutantra* and thus affirms the objective element in external perception. The world exists in fact till the noumenal realisation is attained.

दृष्टिं ज्ञानमयीं कृत्वा परयेद्ब्रह्मस्य जगत् ।

The cause is a higher kind of reality than the effect. Let us take the well-known scriptural declaration:

मृत्तिकेत्येव सत्यं

Just as a clod of clay becomes a pot, a wall, etc., and is all the while only clay despite all changes of name and form (*Nama Rupa*) and is the same clay after the pot or the wall is pulverized, even so is the world one with Brahman. The Brahman existed even before creation.

सदेव सौम्येदमग्र असीत् ।

It is the *Upadana Karana* (the material cause), and the *Nimitta Karana* (the operative and efficient cause) of the universe. The other familiar Adwaita examples and illustrations such as gold and golden ornaments (*kanaka* and *kataka*), the ether in the sky and the ether in a pot (*Akasa* and *Ghata-kasa*), the sea and the waves, the rope and the snake, mother o' pearl and silver, (*Sukla Rajata*), etc., enforce the same conception with wonderful amplitude of affluence of illustration. Sri Sankara's doctrine of *Maya* or *Avidya* or *Adhyasa* is only a compendious way of describing the abovesaid view of the universe. *Maya* is not illusion or non-existence or mirage. The detractors of Sankara misrepresent him and then rise with a sense of achieved victory after disproving what he does not declare. According to him *Maya* is *Bhava Rupa* (positive in its character) and is not an *Abhava* or negation. Hence in the famous verse which sums up the Adwaita viz.,

श्लोकार्थेन प्रवक्ष्यामि यदुक्तं ग्रन्थकोटिभिः ।

ब्रह्मसत्यं जगन्मिथ्याजीवो ब्रह्मैव नापरः ॥

This *Maya* doctrine of Sri Sankara is not an invention by him but is as old as Indian thought itself. The *Swetaswata* Upanishad says: मायां तु प्रकृतिं विद्यान्मायिनंतुमहेश्वरं ।

Another *Sruti* declares : अजायमानो बहुधाविजायते

How can the one be the many at the same time? As the *Mayavadadarpana* puts it clearly and forcibly: “एकस्यानेक मूर्तित्वं युगपत्परमात्मनः । सच्चिदानन्दरूपस्य सिध्येन्मायामृते कथं ॥

(How can the One Brahman who is Sachidananda become manifold, unless it be through Maya?) One solution is by saying that it is because of His Infinite Power. The logical fallacies which vitiate the assumption that the one actually becomes the many are exposed by Advaitic teachers in a variety of ways which cannot be satisfactorily or successfully expounded in a popular address. In the Upanishads the Maya doctrine is expressly laid down in many places. The most explicit statement is in the *Saraswatirahasya Upanishad*. Further, it is a common tenet of all religious systems that *Moksha* (liberation) is due to *Jnana* (Knowledge). From this it follows that *bandha* (bondage) is due to *Ajnana* or *Avidya* or *Adhyasa* or *Maya*. The author of *Svarajya Siddhi* puts this argument neatly thus:

प्राप्तेः साक्षान्मुक्ति इत्युत्तुसिद्धेरध्यासत्वं बन्धनस्यार्थं सिद्धं ॥

In fact the real identity of the soul and the Oversoul cannot be explained on any basis except that of Maya being the cause of our present sense of their non-identity. From the point of view of the cosmos Maya is the cause of the unfoldment of the universe. From the point of view of the individual soul it is the cause of the obscuration of the perfect identity of *Jivatma* and *Paramatma* and is called *Avidya*. If we understand its *vikshepa sakthi* and its *Avarana sakthi* and overcome it by *Jnana* rising into its sublimated state of *Anubhava* or *Aparoksha Sakshatkara*, then and only then can we rise to the Kailasa of Advaitic realisation. Both aspects of Maya are well declared in the Bhagawad Gita in the following verses:

अजोऽपि सन्नव्ययात्मा भूतानामीश्वरोऽपि सन् ।

प्रकृतिं स्वामवष्टभ्य संभवाभ्यात्ममायया ॥

ईश्वरः सर्वभूतानां हृद्देशेऽर्जुन तिष्ठति ।

भ्रामयन्सर्वभूतानि यन्त्रारूढानि मायया ॥

In the *Panchadasi* of Vidyananya the nature of Maya and Avidya is thus set forth:

चिदानन्दमयब्रह्मप्रतिबिम्बसमन्विता ।

तमोरजः सत्त्वगुणा प्रकृतिर्द्विविधा च सा ॥

सत्त्वशुद्धिं विशुद्धिभ्यां मायाविद्ये यते मते ।  
 मायाबिंबो वशीकृत्य तां स्यात्सर्वज्ञ ईश्वरः ॥  
 अविद्या वशस्तत्त्वान्यस्तद्वैचित्र्यादनेकधा ।  
 साकरणशरीरं स्यात्प्रज्ञस्तन्नाभिमानवान् ॥  
 परापरात्मनोरेवं युक्त्या संभावितैकता ।  
 तत्त्वमस्यादिवाक्यैः सा भागत्यागेन लक्ष्यते ॥  
 जगतो यदुपादानं मायामादाय तामसीं ।  
 निमित्तं शुद्धसत्त्वां तामुच्यते ब्रह्मताद्गिरा ॥  
 यदामलिन सत्त्वां तां कामकर्मादि दूषितां ।  
 आदत्त तत्परं ब्रह्मत्वं पदेन तदोच्यते ॥  
 त्रितयीमपि तां मुक्त्वा परस्परविरोधिनीं ।  
 अखण्डं सच्चिदानन्दं महावाक्येन लक्ष्यते ॥  
 सोयमित्यादि वाक्येषु विरोधात्तदिदन्तयोः ।  
 त्यागेन भागयोगेक आश्रयो लक्ष्यते यथा ॥  
 मायाविद्ये विहायैवमुपाधीपरजीवयोः ।  
 अखण्डं सच्चिदानन्दं परं ब्रह्मैव लक्ष्यते ॥

We find in the above passage a wellknown adwaitic word *Upadhi*. We find elsewhere another wellknown word *Sakthi*. The fact is viewed from various angles of vision and called by different names such as

नामरूप, अव्याकृत, अव्यक्त, प्रकृति, शक्ति, उपाधि, अध्यास, अविद्या and माया.

I have been impelled to deal with Sankara's *Maya* doctrine at some length because we have in regard to it the master illusion which is the parent of many subordinate illusions and misrepresentations regarding the Adwaita. The *Maya* about *Maya* is much more wonderful than *Maya* itself. Another misconception about the Adwaita is that it is indifferent to morality. This is a cruel and false and foolish charge. When it declares that *chitta suddhi* (purity of mind) cannot come without *Karma* and that *Jnana* will not come without *chitta suddhi* and that *Moksha* cannot be attained without *Jnana*, what a cruel and audacious misrepresentation it is to say that Adwaita is indifferent to morality. The Kathopanishad says:

नाविरतो दुश्चरितान्नाशान्तो नासमाहितः ।

नाशान्तमानसो वापि प्रज्ञानेनैनमाप्नुयात् ॥

Who are the real relations of the Yogi or the *Jnani*? Let the *Subhashita* speak:

धैर्यं यस्यपिता क्षमा च जननी शान्तिश्चिरं गेहिनी

सत्यं सूनुरयं दयाच भगिनी भ्राता मनःसंयमः ।

शय्याभूमितलं दिशोऽपि वसनं ज्ञानामृतं भोजनं

एते यस्य कुटुंबिनो वद सखे कस्माद्वयं योगिनः ॥

The most perfect moral and ethical attitude is thus summed up in the *Yoga Vasishtha*.

आपद्यचलचित्तोऽस्मि जगन्मित्रंचसंपदि ।

भावाभावविहीनोऽस्मि तेन जीवास्थनामयं ॥

Well has Dr. Deussen said: "The Vedanta in its pure and unfalsified form is the strongest support of pure morality. Indians! keep to it."

Equally unfounded is the charge that Advaita leads to quietism. Is this quietism the indifferentism of the super-egoist? Not at all. In moments of absorption in Brahma Jnana, the Jnani will be quiet because *ex hypothesi* he is at that time out of relation to the senses and is in a state of perfect spiritual bliss. Is he on that account to be regarded as a piece of stone? Not at all. His very presence is a consecration and will uplift all about him by the magic of his realisation. Sri Sankaracharya says well:

ह्यस्माकं यद्वह्नात्मावगतौ सत्यं ।

सर्वं कर्तव्यता हानिः कृतकृत्यता च ॥

A man who has tasted Brahma Jnana cannot be in the net of illusion as he was before. Sri Sankara says:

तस्मान्नावगतब्रह्मात्मभावस्य यथा पूर्वं संसारित्वं । यस्यतु यथा पूर्वं संसारित्वं नासावगतब्रह्मात्मभाव इत्यनवयं ।

Whenever he is not in blissful spiritual communion, he will be in relation of love and compassion and service to the world and will do unselfish and godly work for the welfare of all and for the guidance of the world of love and peace and co-operation and dispassion and renunciation. What does the Lord say in the Gita?

सर्वं भूतस्थमात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि ।

ईक्षते योगयुक्तात्मा सर्वत्र समदर्शनः ॥

यो मां पश्यति सर्वत्र सर्वं च मयि पश्यति ।

तस्याहं न प्रणश्यामि स च मे न प्रणश्यति ॥

सर्वभूतस्थितं योमां भजत्येकत्वमास्थितः ।

सर्वथा वर्तमानोऽपि स योगी मयि वर्तते ॥

आत्मौपम्येन सर्वत्र समं पश्यति योऽर्जुन ।

सुखं वा यदि वा दुःखं स योगी परमो मतः ॥

Equally baseless is the view that the Adwaita either shows Personal God the cold shoulder of neglect or damns Him with faint praise. Sri Sankara says in clear and ringing terms:

द्विरूपे हि ब्रह्मावगम्यते नामरूपविकार भेदोपाधिविशिष्टं तद्विपरीतं सर्वोपाधिविवर्जितं ।  
एवमेकमपि ब्रह्मापेक्षितोपेक्षितोपाधिसंबन्धं निरस्तोपाधिसंबन्धं चोपास्यत्वेन ज्ञेयत्वेन वेदान्ते-  
नृपदिश्यते ॥

He says again:

मोक्षसाधन सामग्र्यां भक्तिरेव गरीयसी ।

A well-known Sanskrit stanza says:

ईश्वरानुग्रहादेव पुंसामद्वैतवासना ।

The Absolute in relation to the cosmos is the Personal God. But its relation to the cosmos is not a relation of external compulsion. Nirguna Brahma and Saguna Brahma are but two aspects of the same Eternal Being.

Thus these and other misconceptions about Adwaita, widely prevalent though they be, have not an atom of truth in them. The Adwaita is in right and harmonious relation to the entirety of Indian ethic and metaphysic; and in it we see the highest synthesis of Karma, Yoga, Bhakthi and Jnana. What then are its *differentia*, its special and distinctive and distinguishing features? It unhesitatingly takes its stand on the Veda. It shows the centre to which all radii of doctrines converge. It is as all-inclusive as the sky, and allows all luminaries to shine in its spacious amplitude. It is simple and profound at the same time. Its doctrines of *Maya* or *Avidya* or *Adhyasa*, its *Vivartavada*, its declaration of the identity of *Jivatma* and *Paramatma* and its proclamation of *Mukti* being a state of being and not an acquisition from without are among its greatest distinctions and glories and entitle it to the throne of sovereignty—the *Sarvajna Peeta*—in the Durbar of Universal thought.

I shall conclude this discourse by a brief reference to the Adwaita ideal of Mukthi. The chief glory of each faith is its

conception of beatitude, just as its acid test is its attitude towards ethical and social life. The mind of man cannot conceive of a loftier and purer and holier and more blissful beatitude than the Adwaitic beatitude. The Adwaitic Mukthi is not an acquisition but is a realisation of the true and inalienable nature of the soul. The function of scripture is ज्ञापक and not कारक. When *Avidya* is removed, the true nature of the soul as Infinite and Eternal Bliss—*Sachidananda*—is realised. The *Brahma Sutra* says:

मुक्तः प्रति ज्ञातः

Sri Sankara says in his *Bhashya* thereon:

स सर्वबन्धनिर्मुक्तः शुद्धैवात्मनाऽवतिष्ठते ।

"When a man is freed from disease and attains health, it is wrong to say that health is the effect of the removal of the disease. His health is his natural state which is no longer clouded by disease."

Thus in the Adwaitic ideal of mukthi, we have no conception of any change of place from the earth. There is no element of sensual pleasures or sublimated pleasures or superpleasures. It does not admit of any gradation or any graduated scale of bliss. It declares the state of eternal being and bliss as the acme of liberation. A well-known stanza occurring in the *Mundaka Upanishad* as well as in other *Upanishads* says well :

भिद्यते हृदयप्रन्थिरिच्छन्ते सर्वं संशयाः ।

क्षीयन्ते चास्य कर्माणि तस्मिन्दृष्टे परावरे ॥

The Adwaitic Mukthi is not Nirvana or extinction but *Brahma Nirvana*, or the attainment of *Akhanda Satchidananda*.

Further, the Adwaitic doctrine is that *Videhamukti* (liberation after death) is the attainment of self-realisation (through *Jnana*) at the time of death and that *Jivanmukti* (immediate liberation) is the attainment of self-realisation through *Jnana* even here and in this body. Those who pursue the *Karma Marga* go by the *Dakshina Marga* or *Dhoomadi Marga* to heaven (*Swarga*) and enjoy super-terrestrial joys there and return to the earth after their store of merit is spent. Those who pursue the *Sagunopasana* go through the *Archiradi Marga* and attain *Krama Mukti* in *Brahmaloka* and reach the supreme liberation along with *Brahma*.

Let me now cull and gather and make a garland (वेदान्त वाक्य कुसुमग्रथन , to use Sankara's words) of a few great Adwaitic passages in the Upanishads:

अणोरणीयान्महतो महीयानात्मास्य जन्तोर्निहितो गुहायां ।  
 तमक्रतुः पश्यति वीतशोको धातुः प्रसादान्महिमानमात्मनः ॥  
 अशरीरं शरीरेष्वनवस्थेष्ववस्थितं ।  
 महान्तं विभुमात्मानं मत्वा धीरो न शोचति ॥  
 अभिर्यथैको भुवनं प्रविष्टो रूप रूप प्रतिरूपो बभुव ।  
 एकस्तथा सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा रूपं रूपं प्रतिरूपो वहिश्च ॥  
 आमात्रश्चतुर्थोऽव्यवहार्यः प्रपञ्चोपशमः शिवोऽद्वैत एवमोकार  
 आत्मैव संविशत्यात्मनात्मानं य एवं वेद य एवं वेद ॥  
 अनेन जीवेनात्मनानुप्रविश्य नामरूपेण्यकरवाणि ।

I shall quote in conclusion only two passages—one from an enthusiastic foreign lover of Sankara's works and the other from the writings of my humble self :

"What shall we say, then, of the Master Sankara ? Is he not the guardian of the sacred waters, who, by his commentaries, has hemmed about against all impurities or Time's jealousy, first the mountain Tarus of the Upanishads, then the serene forest-lake of the Bhagavad Gita, and last the deep reservoir of the Sutras, adding from the generous riches of his wisdom, lovely fountains and lakelets of his own, the crest jewel, the Awakening and Discernment."

"Thou bliss of inner vision incarnate !  
 When I thy holy Bhashyas read, I seem  
 To see in Kalati by Alwaye stream  
 Thy birth as master of the cosmic fate.  
 With *Vidya* as thy soul's self-chosen mate  
 You followed Thought's bright super-solar gleam.  
 In your victorious march, your mind's bright beam  
 Dispelled *Avidya's* night of ancient date.  
 I seem to see in Mandana's great house  
 Thy orange-robed form in glory shine  
 Before the arbitress Saraswathi.  
 Thy four Mutts stand like four fulfill'd vows  
 To build to God thy thoughts' supernal shrine  
 And lead mankind to wisdom's ecstacy."

## HUMANISING INFLUENCE IN A JAIL

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**M**ODERN Psychology tells us that every created being is a manifestation of the Divinity. Even he who appears to be the greatest criminal has in himself the germ of goodness, which has however been unfortunately neglected. Therefore the best way of reforming him is to place him in surroundings where there will be no scope whatever for the development of his evil propensities, every facility being at the same time given him for encouraging the virtuous elements in him. Hence it is that in America, in Germany, in England and other advanced countries, the treatment given to a prisoner in the jail is becoming more and more humane. The greatest philanthropists of the nineteenth century devoted the best part of their time and energy towards the question of 'Prison Reform'; and the result is that the old ideal of punishing criminals and condemning them as being wicked all round has been given up in favour of the modern ideal. For, now-a-days, the prevalent belief is that punishment for the sake of improving his character ought alone to be resorted to. For, the real meaning of the term 'penitentiary' is that it is a place where sinners may sit and do *penance* for their past crimes, and, by thus repenting for their old misdeeds, better their nature. The belief that 'once a criminal, he should always be a criminal' is entirely mistaken. There is redemption for all. No one is to be denied the hope of a better life. As the old adage has it,

"There is much good in the worst of us  
And so much bad in the best of us  
That it behoves none of us  
To criticise the rest of us."

Was not an old and savage hunter turned into the greatest of ancient Indian Rishis, I mean, Valmiki, the poet of the Ramayana? Was not a sensuous reveller transformed into the most pious devotee of the Lord, I mean, Leela Sukar? No one knows on whom the grace of the Almighty will fall and at what time. His actions are so mysterious and so much beyond all our little calculations.

These were the thoughts that came into my mind as I visited the Bangalore Central Jail some two months back. Through the kindness of the Indian Superintendent Mr. Matchaivya, I was shown round the various cells, and had thus a good opportunity of studying conditions as they obtain there at first hand. The most striking feature in the whole institution was the broad sympathy that marked every one of the

transactions there. It was not a rule of thumb, for there prevailed the human touch in the treatment of even the most desperate of criminals. I was very glad indeed to find that the love which every one in the State (of Mysore) bears to the person and the Throne of His Highness The Maharaja was so great and their affection for their beloved Monarch so deep that there was not one prisoner in the whole jail who was imprisoned for the sake of sedition! There were criminals of other types no doubt, but a political prisoner was a thing unknown in the State.

Even with reference to the others, the aim of the Superintendent has been to wean the unfortunates away from their old life of sin and crime and turn them into better men and women. Recognising as he does that in ninety per cent. of the cases, poverty and starvation are the reasons for crime, he tries to teach every one of the criminals admitted in the jail some art or craft suited to his intelligence and his ordinary habits, so that when he goes out of its portals he may have some honest way of eking out his livelihood. The results in most cases have been satisfactory. And this is shown by the fact that only a very small fraction of the old criminals come back to the jail. The rest have been improved materially, so that they have turned out as honest, industrious and law-abiding citizens of the land.

This improvement is sought to be effected in various ways. The proverb is always true that Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do. The Superintendent therefore sees to it that there is no hand idle within the premises, nay nor a vacant brain nor an idle mind. For the juvenile there is regular drill, thus tending to improve their physique, and there are lay teachers whose business it is to train their intellect. Not this alone; there are lectures on temperance held now and then to show them the evils of drinking. Besides, there are various religious and moral discourses held in Tamil, Kanarese and Urdu or the other vernaculars to bring home to their minds the happiness of a virtuous and good life.

For the grown up, there is always some suitable industry taught. And they have such a variety of courses that there is scope for very free choice from among them all. For example, those who have an inclination for such pursuits are taught cloth-weaving and carpentry. There are sewing machines for tailors, smithy-shops for gold and silver smiths, and those with manual dexterity may work at carpet-making or the manufacture of rattan articles. And in all work strict attention is paid to the facts that no one's caste prejudices are offended in this kind of work offered him.

So far for keeping their hands busy. But what is of even more importance is to fill their minds with pure thoughts and noble ideals.

It is with this end that religious preachers of the various denominations are holding classes to impart to them the hope and the consolation of Religion. To us the phrase 'the consolation of Religion' is almost meaningless; but to him who is perhaps to be hanged in the next half hour, the words of wisdom and the hope of a better life after death are full of the deepest significance.

Precisely at the moment when he is hanged, a cocoanut is broken to the Lord and burning camphor waved before His image, and a priest prays for the deliverance of his soul. The effect of this procedure, in practice, has always been to make the criminal less desperate and more calm than he would otherwise be.

As they are strictly respecting religious scruples, there are separate priests for Hindus, Christians, Muhammadans and Jains. His Holiness Swami Nirmalanandaji Maharaj, President of the Ramakrishna Mission centre at Bangalore, has deputed Swami Somananda who is acquainted with Kanarese and Telugu to work in the Bangalore Jail, and he is in charge of the Hindus. He conducts classes on every Sunday morning, and holds Bhajana as well. A separate shrine is set apart and he has devised a form of worship in which the inmates themselves have to do all the work, such as gathering flowers for puja, cleaning the room and decorating it with artistic designs. They chant the appropriate hymns and mantras, wave the burning camphor before the image of God and prostrate at His feet as supplicants for His Mercy and Blessings. I was surprised to find them doing all this and reciting such soul-elevating slokas as those contained in Dakshinamurthy stotra in Sanskrit. There were 746 prisoners on the day I visited the jail, and I understood that most of them were regular in attending this puja. They have begun to like it, the Superintendent assured me, and to regard it as the best part of their day's work.

The next thing I was impressed with was the system of rewards they have devised for industry and good conduct. If a prisoner is behaving obediently, and is always industrious and attentive to the work allotted to him, he is very often promoted to be a Night Watchman or a Work Overseer or a Warder Guard. The point about it is that such a well-behaved man is given ordinary decent clothing and not the particular dress which marks off the prisoner from the free man. And when he merits it by uniformly good conduct for a long time, a remission is shown to him, and his sentence is reduced accordingly. That such liberated prisoners are aware of these elevating and ennobling influences is shown clearly by their frequent visits to the Swamiji after they have come out of the jail and the spontaneous homage they pay him even when there is no necessity for them to do so.

Another softening influence which I found in the jail was the permission given to the near and dear relatives of a prisoner to visit him now and then. They bring, as it were, a breath of fresh air, an atmosphere of light and freedom of the outside world; and there is absolutely no doubt many a character has been reformed in this way. The thought of the wife or child, the mother or son who is sorry and has to suffer for his misdeed works like magic, and the man is impelled to behave better, if not for himself, at least for the sake of those whose honour and reputation he has brought into jeopardy. When he has been more than usually industrious, he is given some money-payment which he may remit to his relatives as a sign that he is still trying to do his bit for them. Thus, in every way, the rigours of prison life are smoothened, and he is taught the dignity of a human being.

For the more intellectual among them, there is a library, provided by a kind Government, where they may be seen reading books or journals. Besides there is a private library where useful books are kept for their use. And to show to them the value of Education, the more literate prisoners who have also been of good behaviour all through are allowed to teach their neighbours in their leisure hours!

Again, the most patient and sympathetic attention is paid to their grievances and complaints and as far as possible their requests are complied with. They are freely allowed to write appeals in minimising the sentence passed on them or in reducing it to a shorter period or for mercy on the ground of heartfelt and sincere repentance; and in all cases, the reply is communicated to them as soon as it is received.

Last but not least in importance is the arrangement for food in this 'House of Discipline.' Generally the meals served here are not very much different from what they are used to take in ordinary life. It is fair in quality and sufficient in quantity to keep them in normal health. Vegetarians are given rice and curry or ragi as the case may be; and for non-vegetarians meat is given every Saturday. In the morning the meal is given at 7 a. m. and in the evening at 5 p. m and speaking on the whole, the arrangement seems to be quite satisfactory.

I was quite delighted with my visit to the Penitentiary, especially because such excellent conditions were to be found in an Indian State, and that under purely Indian management. In fact the Superintendent is held in such respect and regard by all the prisoners that he moves about freely among them all without any bodyguard or gun or other means of protection for himself. He is not afraid of even the most desperate murderer that has found his way in his prison because he believes in all the conquering force of love and sympathy! It is this love and sympathy that has made him use such humanising and refining influences in the jail.

## EDITORIAL NOTES

### SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE FULFILMENT OF HINDUISM

**T**HE months of January and February witness, in the round of time every year, the celebrations of the nativity of the two great souls of modern India. And the names of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, within such a short period of a score and a half years, have become the household word, not only in this ancient land of the Rishis but also outside India, among all true seekers of the Light of Heaven. In fact those who can feel the pulse of time, feel unerringly that these two great souls have started a new epoch not only in this land but also for the whole civilised world the full unfoldment of which may take a thousand years more. Within such a short period since their physical disappearance from this earth, their ideas have already become the veritable leaven of the thought-life of India. Wherever we find great manifestations of creative genius in this land, invariably we notice at the back of it the inspiration that proceeded from these two great souls. And so their popularity is increasing day by day both in its intensity and its extensity. That is a very hopeful sign of the day. The heroes' trumpet-call did not fall absolutely on deaf ears and the leviathan is rising again.

After perusing the marvellous life of the Great Master and having heard all of his inner life from those who had the blessed privilege of knowing him personally, hundreds of this land are coming to the conclusion that Sri Ramakrishna cannot but be an Incarnation of God. Perhaps this assertion may appear as too uncritical and too big a pill to be swallowed for some hyper-critical readers of ours. But Incarnation or no Incarnation, it is but an irrefutable fact that Sri Ramakrishna was the fulfilment of Hinduism in the fullest sense of the term.

In the whole range of the religious history of this land, never has arisen a figure who combined in himself all the different aspects of that body of faith which goes by the name Hinduism. Starting from the dim pre-historic days of the Vedas, and coming down with the current of time to the last century, when we scrutinise and ransack all the great personalities who form the shining galaxy of the spiritual stars

of the land, we fail to find a figure, an individual teacher, who stands out singularly as a summation of the whole. The Vedic Age is watered principally by three main currents of faith, *viz.*, Karma, Jnana, and Upasana. We notice the Vedic sages engaged in the performance of complex sacrifices and offering their oblations in the name of this god or that for the conservation of either *manushavitha* or *dāivivitha* (worldly values or heavenly values), or merged in the self-analysis of *neti neti* to determine the transcendent Atman Who is eternally pure, free, ever awake, and infinite, or engaged in the upasana making some of the phenomena of nature or aspects of mind as their *pratika*, the symbol of *Saguna Brahman* for worship and meditation. But there are ample evidences to show that these three streams of Jnana, Karma, and Upasana were always held as juxtaposed and contradictory to each other even in the Vedic Age. Assertions like "Brahma grows by work," "This raft of Yajna is too frail," "The uncreated can never be attained by work," "As a hungry child *supplicates* her mother, so do all creatures worship *agnihotra*," and so on, are not rare to be met with in the Vedic Scriptures, although there arose from time to time Rishis like Deerghathama and Yagnavalkya who attempted at reconciliations among Jnana, Karma, and Upasana, and brought about a meeting point of the three currents. But their note of reconciliation is often drowned in the din of the conflict that was started by the Vedic Rishis and was perpetuated in the subsequent ages by the followers of Mimamsa and Vedanta schools. Later, in the Puranic Age, quelling all the war-cries of the various sects once arose, no doubt, the thundering voice of synthesis of Bhagavan Sri Krishna. He, both by his life and precepts, showed to the then Hindu world how Jnana, Karma and Upasana including Bhakti stand in perfect harmony in the magnificent religious edifice of the Vedas. He showed for the first time perhaps, that a divine alchemy can be wrought on Karma by making it motiveless and thus transmuting it at once into Upasana and a path of God-realisation. He showed that Bhakti is not essentially different from true Jnana in its final issue, although their starting points may be different. He called to make life a veritable *Yagna*, a sacrifice, be that *Yagna* of one kind or another, as laying stress upon one process of thought or another, or on action, or emotion. Perhaps no one religious teacher of the world contributed so much for the

betterment of humanity as Bhagavan Sri Krishna. His personality was so manifold and genius so versatile that he seems to stand head and shoulder above all the other religious teachers of the world in point of fullness of manhood. And no wonder that the Hindus call him the greatest divine Incarnation and worship his memory as constituting the very soul of Hindu culture. In India to-day, perhaps there is no other book that is more popular and commands greater respect than the Bhagavad Gita, and this shows how the Song Celestial has entered into the very bone and marrow of this ancient nation.

And what constitutes the grandeur of this Celestial Song? An impartial student of the Gita notices first its wonderful harmony between the theory of Karma (obligatory duties) and the theory of Jnana, secondly, the path of Jnana and Bhakti, and thirdly, the reconciliation between Vedanta and Sankhya. Understanding the mind of the people of his time, Sri Krishna harmonised in a wonderful sweep of generalisation that "all paths lead to the same goal"

ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तांस्तथैव भजाम्यहम् ।

मम वर्त्मानुवर्तते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः ॥

(By whichever path man comes to Me, I reach him by the same. Man follows after all the path that must ultimately lead to Me). And his own life shows what absolute non-attachment and motiveless action is, and also how exuberance of *Prema* and *Bhakti* can well be harmonised with the serene meditation of the Jnanin! The Gita and the Maha-Bharata gives one aspect of the great Teacher, and Bhagavatam and Vishnupuranam supply the other. The Krishna of the Gita without his Vrindavana-leela is no doubt an imperfect synthesis. Similarly the *Gopijanavallabha Sri Krishna* without His *Parthasarathi* aspect is an imperfect manifestation of His divinity. The combination of the two can only justify the assertion of Bhagavata Purana that कृष्णस्तु भगवान् स्वयम् (Krishna was the full manifestation of divinity)

But in the subsequent ages that followed the time of Sri Krishna, His grand voice of synthesis was made more and more obscure by the different commentators who rose from time to time and explained the texts of the Gita to support the views of their respective sects. Moreover with the rise and decline of Buddhism and along with it India's coming into contact with the thought-life of the outside world, there arose innumerable religious sects with their Vedic and semi-Vedic

doctrines and dogmas, which made a synthetic view of the entire Hinduism almost impossible. Moreover, when there arose the three Agamic schools of thought, *viz.*, the Vaishnava Agama or Pancharatra, the Saiva Agama or Saiva Siddhanta, and the Sakta Agama or the Tantras, and monopolised the practical religious life of the Hindus ousting the Vedic sacrifices and *Upasanas* throughout the land, things became hopelessly confused and sectarianism and narrow bigotry usurped the place of divine catholicity of the religion of the Gita. And the most astonishing fact was that it was the very Vaishnavas who worshipped Krishna as the supreme divine Incarnation that were the most exclusive of all.

Since the days of Sri Krishna there appeared hundreds of religious teachers, God-intoxicated souls and *Acharyas* in different parts of this great continent, but the wonder of it is that all of them came as exponents of one or the other aspects of that body of religious thoughts which is rather loosely named to-day as Hinduism. A few most prominent of these may be mentioned here such as Kapila, Buddha, Mahavir, Sankaracharya, Ramanuja, Madhwacharya, Gouranga and Vallabhacharya. And it is needless to point out to the students of the religious history of India that all these great religious teachers were exponents of one sectarian view or other of Hinduism. And none of them ever attempted at anything like synthesis of the different schools of religious thought of the land. Among the mediæval religious thinkers of India who attempted at something like synthesis was Vijnana Bhikshu the author of *Samanwaya Bhashya* of the Vedanta Sutra. But neither was he a religious teacher of the first order, nor was his *Samanwaya* (synthesis or harmony) very cogent. Moreover he attempted to synthetise only the six principal schools of Indian philosophy such as Nyaya, Vaisesika, Patanjala, Sankhya, Mimamsaka, and Vedanta. It was wholly a speculative performance of an inferior order with rather halting arguments and too sweeping generalisations. Evidently that is why it did not carry much weight with the thinkers of the land, nor impress effectively upon its general thought-life. Further, it had no religious bearing. So Vijnana Bhikshu can by no means be called an apostle of synthetic Hinduism.

But "God fulfils Himself in many ways" and perhaps the time came for His fulfilling Himself by exhibiting a synthesis of religious thoughts grander than was ever shown before. Swami Vivekananda tells us about his Master, while speaking

on Gita: "But even where Krishna failed to show a complete reconciliation (*Samanwaya*) among these warring sects, it was fully accomplished by Ramakrishna Paramahansa in the nineteenth century." Indeed the life of the Master reveals unmistakably the fact that what Sri Krishna started to achieve but could not complete in his time for some reason or other was fully accomplished by Sri Ramakrishna. He started his religious career from the crude image-worship and ascended the ladder of Upasana step by step by sheer force of his inner devotion and hankering, and passing through all the different phases of religious experiences as depicted in different sectarian Scriptures of Hinduism, reached the highest acme of God-realisation or Nirvikalpa Samadhi which is considered in the Vedic Faith as the last word on religion. Not only did he combine in himself in the fullest harmony Jnana, Karma, Bhakti, and Upasana, but also showed to the world by actual experiences and practices the grand synthesis that exists behind the apparently contradictory views of the numerous sects belonging to the three principal Agamic schools. He showed by his life that it is perfectly possible, nay imperative, for one to become a Sakta of Saktas and go through all the different religious practices pertaining to the three *Acharas*, viz., *Pasyachara*, *Virachara* and *Divyachara*, and at the same time to melt his heart with the sweet symphony of the Pancharatra school adopting the well-known five kinds of *bhavas*. He showed by his life that it is possible to put oneself under the rigorous discipline of Raja Yoga, and at the same time become the free lance of a Jnanin. He was the most orthodox of the orthodox observing to the very letter of the law, refusing to eat even the *prasad* of the Kali temple because the temple belonged to a Sudra and thus respected the institution of caste. Yet he had the inner strength and perfect freedom to break all bonds of conventionalities and fetters of slavery to custom, and taste even *Mahamamsam* in a superior consciousness of ecstasy. He showed by his very life how soul is truly sex-less and how a true devotee, buoyed up by his religious sincerity and ardour, can truly un-sex himself for the convenience of his spiritual practices and attainment of certain spiritual experiences. The ideal of a spiritual aspirant is perfect freedom from the bondage of matter, of which this body comes first, and he showed how this body can be wholly and completely transcended in the fostering of a religious *bhava*. The name of Siva, Vishnu, Kali and Rama could produce exactly the same kind of thrill

and rob away his relative consciousness in producing the Beati-  
fic Vision of the one *Akhanda Satchidananda*. He himself used  
to say that his experiences had gone beyond all recorded  
experiences of the Vedas and the Vedanta. He could lose  
his mind in the contentless consciousness, of the *Nirvikalpa  
Samadhi*, realising the Absolute face to face, as it were, and at  
the same time he could come down to the relative plane of  
consciousness and worship the Personal God, his Divine  
Mother, with all the adoration and simplicity of a little child.  
The range of the two poles between which his mind swung  
was infinite indeed. And the religious history of no other  
nation can point out any individual whose mind embraced such  
an infinite space of religious thoughts. His mind was deep  
like the ocean and expansive like the infinite sky.

This is not all. As if to prognosticate the coming reli-  
gion of the future generations, he appeared as a harbinger of  
world-synthesis. His mind was not satisfied with the finding  
of this harmony of different sectarian views of Hindu-  
ism, but aspired to bring about a wider synthesis with other  
religions as well. And he did find the same harmony exist-  
ing behind Christianity and Islam. His was not a theoretical  
synthesis of an arm-chaired philosopher, but was a real experi-  
ence gathered through the regular orthodox disciplines pertain-  
ing to these two religions. So far he has shown to the genera-  
tions that followed him once for all that the basic principles of  
all religions are the same, and 'all are but His paths'. The man  
who fights in the name of his religion really fights for his  
own doxy and thereby indirectly blasphemes Him. All  
bigotry, all sectarianism, all churchianity is but a denial of  
God's religion and a great blasphemy to God. The modern  
human society is in sore need of this gospel as it has never  
been before. Then, in the view of the fact that every great  
World Teacher is a fulfilment, an epitome of His past, and  
a hope and beacon-light for the future, does it require much  
stretch of imaginatoin to believe that Sri Ramakrishna is the  
real fulfilment of Hinduism ?

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## SWAMI PARAMANANDA BACK IN INDIA

### A PUBLIC RECEPTION AND AN INTERVIEW

Swami Paramananda, President, Vedanta Centre, Boston, U. S. A., author of numerous poetical works and works on Indian philosophy, and editor of the Vedanta monthly *The Message of the East*, arrived at Bombay on Friday the 12th February after an absence from India of nearly 20 years. A public reception under the chairmanship of Mr. K. Natarajan, Editor, *Indian Social Reformer*, was given to the Swami the next day. The Swami, replying, said the message he would give to India as a result of his experience in the West was that the true joy lay not in external possessions, but in the inner vision and self-consecrated service of others. That was also the message of Hinduism. "The message that India had to give to the West was the message of brotherhood, universality and tolerance—the message which Sri Ramakrishna gave them. By the blessings of God and of their Guru he has been enabled to convey that message not only to America but to several parts of Europe as well where His Mission had established centres which were very popular among the people of those places."—

*The Bombay Chronicle* has published in its issue of the 18th February the following report of an interesting interview with the Swami :—

The Ramakrishna Ashram which is located in a quiet beautiful nook of Laxminagar in the suburb of Khar has been a regular place of pilgrimage to the lovers of Hindu religion and philosophy for the last few days. The centre of attraction is Swami Paramananda, founder and head of the Boston Branch of the Ramakrishna Mission in America, who returned to India on Friday last after an absence of nearly 20 years. The Swamiji, who is a Bengali by birth and a disciple of the illustrious Swami Vivekananda has been in the United States since 1906, and throughout this long period he has been spreading the teachings and ideals of Hinduism and the Vedanta philosophy by classes, discourses, lectures and writings. In all his teachings, he has been singularly free from any sectarian propaganda, and has mainly dwelt on the larger unities of thought and life by which the diversities of colour, race, speech and religion might be reconciled into harmony and goodwill.

AN INTERNATIONAL FIGURE

The most far-reaching influence exerted by the Swamiji has been through his books which now number more than twenty-five. Many of them have gone through five or six editions and have been translated into French, German and Swedish as well as the Indian vernaculars. His literary style is peculiarly simple, direct and delicate, and his luminous exposition makes the higher life practical to the businessman and the worker, and within easy reach of the humblest soul.

Questioned by our representative as to how his teachings of the Vedanta philosophy had influenced the Americans, the Swamiji replied that his method of approach to their hearts was more through personal contact than through formal lectures on Hindu philosophy and religion. In his talks and discourses, he used to dwell mainly on the practical aspects, and explain to them how it would help even the men of the world to live better and happier lives. This utility point of view has been the dominant note of all his preachings and writings.

NEED FOR CULTURAL CONTACT

Asked as to the American attitude towards India and her problems, the Swamiji replied that Americans were too busy with their own affairs to go into the details of the Non-Cooperation movement, though they appreciated the spiritual aspect of the struggle. The Swamiji depreciated any tendency to ask for help from the Americans in a beggarly way. He advised that Indians should establish a point of contact with the Americans, and should trust to the latter to respond sympathetically.

Asked to explain how such a point of contact could be developed, the Swamiji said that if Indians who went to America lived with certain ideals, it would have an influence on those with whom they came into contact. India had a spiritual heritage to share with others ; but the right way to give it was not through formal lectures, but by living with them as one of them, and at the same time maintaining our own ideals and setting up a higher standard of life to them. If we had any intellectual or spiritual gifts, we must exhibit these to them in their practical aspects, as he had tried to do. " Indians," he said, " can give to the Americans a sense of balance, and can teach them how to combine quiet with energy in their lives. Americans readily appreciate the good things that they see in other peoples. And if we take our place with them as equals, and do our part they will respect us, and give us any help they can, spontaneously and of their own accord. "

Questioned regarding the recent manifestations of anti-Asiatic feeling in America, the Swamiji said that the only remedy that India can adopt with advantage is to send her sons to America who would influence the people there with their personal contact as explained above.

## RESPECT FOR GANDHI AND TAGORE

Asked regarding American opinion about Mahatma Gandhi, Swamiji said that he was held in very high respect there and his ideals and utterances had greatly impressed them. Some of them even wanted to invite him to America but he (Swamiji) was opposed to the idea, because the Americans were not fully prepared to appreciate his message properly, and Mahatmaji would be more respected by remaining here than going there. In this connection, Swamiji instanced the case of Dr. Rabindranath Tagore, who, when he went to America, was told by one of his admirers, "I would have liked you better if I had not seen you at all."

Concluding, the Swamiji recited, as a parting gift, the following verses from his *Rhythm of Life* :—

"Let him speak whose spirit flows like the river in  
flood-time, full and strong ;

Let others keep silent—

The tongue that speaketh soulless words  
But scattereth pebbles before hungry mouths."

The Swamiji left for Calcutta on Wednesday.

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## NEWS AND REPORTS

### REPORT OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION STUDENTS' HOME, MADRAS; FOR 1925

We have great pleasure in noting that the report shows steady and all-round progress for the year under review. The congestion in the Home was relieved by the opening of the Residential High School in July and the removal of the classes to the new building. The temporary recognition granted to the School was made permanent and recognition was given to the lower forms as well. As in the last year, the results of the examinations are satisfactory. The District Educational Officer records satisfaction at the efficient and vigorous management of the institution.

An Industrial School has been opened in July last by the construction of a new workshop with the necessary equipments and recognised by the Department of Industries. The subjects taught are carpentry, cabinet-making and weaving ; preparations are being made for instruction in other allied subjects, the first step taken being to open the Mechanical Foreman and Fitters Section. The course of study extends over four years. Two subjects are compulsory in the lower grade extending over two years, while in the higher grade of two years' course the pupil specialises in the subject in which he has greater aptitude. The pupils are also coached up in business methods. Eighteen boys are working in this section for a professional career.

The Home is the vital and distinguishing feature of the institution. At present 122 boys are living in the Home. With a view to ensure that the boys remain in the Home for a sufficiently long period and thus derive the full benefit of the Home, admissions are confined to lower forms, few for higher forms, and none for college classes.

Swami Saswatananda assumed charge of the Residential Wardenship of the Home in July and the tutorial system was further developed and laid on a definite and well-defined basis so as to set before students the ideals of a *Gurukula* adapted to modern conditions. Every detail in the life of the boys was thoroughly scrutinised and supervised by the Warden and Ward-masters who each had 20 boys under his direct guidance, the guiding principle in the matter of training being to make the boys feel that it is their own home and its ideals could be realized only through their self-sacrifice and co-operation. Moral and religious instruction and devotional practices form an essential part and special feature of the Home. Stories from the scriptures, devotional literature, the Gita and essentials of Hindu religion and ethics on a rational basis

and a comparative study of other religions with a view to observe the harmony among them are taught according to the age and capacity of the boys to assimilate them. Increased facilities were given for sports and games and every boy had his turn daily in one of these. Greater attention was paid to the health of the boys and the health report is satisfactory. Ample opportunities were given to the boys for the enjoyment of the æsthetic and the humane, and for eclat through *Harikathas*, stories from Epics, musical performances, cinema, lantern lectures, visits to places of interest, and festivals. Through the generous support of the appreciating public the financial side of the institution has also been bettered very much. The Permanent Endowment Fund was raised to Rs. 1,23,901-1-3 during the year. The management thanks all those who have helped in the development of the institution and looks forward with faith for greater support in the years to come.

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We have also received the report of the following institutions some time back all of which have done a great service in removing the sufferings and attending to various other needs of the localities by giving medical aid and nursing the sick, help in money and in kind to the poor and the needy, education to the backward classes through primary institutions and libraries, relief work in times of epidemics, flood and famine and the preaching of the *dharma* through classes and lectures :

1. THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, SONARGAON—for 1921-1924.
2. THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAM, NARAYANAGUNJ—for 1922-1924.
3. THE RAMAKRISHNA SEVASHRAM, AMINABAD, LUCKNOW—for 1923-1924.
4. THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA, BRINDABAN—for 1924.
5. THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA. KANKHAL, HARIDWAR—for 1924.
6. THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION ASHRAMA, SARISHA, DIAMOND HARBOUR—for 1923-1924.

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*A new Vedanta Centre in America* :—On Friday, the 6th of November, 1925, was opened a new Vedanta Centre in Portland, Oregon, under the auspices of Swami Prakashananda, the head of the Hindu Temple, San Francisco, and of Swami Prabhavananda whom our readers may remember as one of the former Editors of this magazine and of whose successful tour in Portland we had given a report in another issue. We wish the new centre God's blessings and all success.

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The Griha-Pravesh ceremony of the Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyapith—a residential school for boys—at Deoghar took place on the morning of the 18th January, 1926.

His Holiness Srimath Swami Shivanandaji Maharaj, President, Swami Shankaranandaji, Swami Dhiranandaji and several other Sannyasins and Brahmacharins of the R. K. Mission graced the occasion by their presence. Many guardians of the Vidyapith boys together with a number of other guests and a big representative gathering from the local public made the function a really imposing one.

The sublimity of the occasion was heightened when His Holiness Swami Shivanandaji Maharaj carried with due reverence the portrait of Bhagawan Sri Ramakrishna to the new buildings and performed Puja and Aratrik in the midst of blowing of conches, singing of hymns and religious songs. The guests then attended the worship of Goddess Saraswati which was being performed in the neighbouring room.

At about 2 P. M. all invited monks, guests and also poor labourers of the locality were sumptuously entertained with Prasadam.

The annual prize distribution ceremony of the institution was held the following day at 3 P. M. After some beautiful recitations by the boys, His Holiness distributed the prizes and the meeting was concluded by short addresses to the boys given by His Holiness Srimath Swami Shivanandaji and Swami Nirvedanandaji.

The delight and enthusiasm of all present made the function a complete success.

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The First Convention of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission will be held during the first week of April at their headquarters, the Ramakrishna Math, Belur, Howrah. Representatives from ninety-four centres as well as the monastic members of the Ramakrishna Order have been invited for the Convention. The Convention is meant for devising better means and methods of work and for bringing about greater co-ordination between different centres and for discussing the ideas and ideals and methods preached by Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. We pray that the Lord may shower His blessings on the Convention and make it a grand success.

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#### CHRISTMAS AT THE VEDANTA CENTRE, PORTLAND

*Mrs. R. C. Soule writes :—*

The Christmas Service held by Swami Prabhavananda in the new Vedanta Centre at Portland, Oregon, will remain long in the memory of those present.

The service was opened with a Christmas Medley played on the violin by Miss Betty Soule. We all felt a special blessing and beauty



in the salutation of the Divine Mother when chanted by the Swami. This was followed with a vocal number "Blest Christmas morn," sung by Miss Aletha McKeeny. The decoration of Christmas holly and cedar boughs gave our centre a festive atmosphere and proper setting for the impressive service which followed.

The discourse on "The Birth of Christ," given by the Swami, brought to our western minds many new and beautiful ideas from the eastern view-point.

The Swami showed us how the great Fatherhood of God had, all through the ages, provided a Saviour to mankind whenever the need arose. Whenever men's minds become so materialised that they lose sight of the Divine Idea, God embodies Himself in human form to save the world. Not only in the birth of Jesus, the Christ, has this happened, but many times throughout the ages, and many times again will it happen. That ultimately each one of us will be a Christ—all will realise the oneness with the Father—that none will be lost.

The urge was strong that we show the brotherly love and oneness with the Father in our everyday life, which Jesus, Buddha, Krishna and other great prophets lived, in order to teach us by their example.

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#### CHRISTMAS SERVICE AT THE HINDU TEMPLE, SAN FRANCISCO

On Christmas morning, services were held at the Hindu Temple, to commemorate the birth of the Lord Jesus. The Temple was lavishly decorated with the evergreens and the red berries usual at this season, and huge vases of bright-hued flowers effectively placed on and about the platform. As one entered the cheerful and inviting auditorium, the spirit of Christmas not only greeted the eye, in its outer manifestation, but it warmed the heart and filled the mind.

The services opened with the organ playing the famous Christmas hymn "Come All Ye Faithful," and after the Sanskrit chant by our Swami, Miss Isabelle Bissett sang a beautiful soprano solo. Then Swami Prakashananda delivered his lecture on "Birth of the Christ Spirit". During the offertory, that fine old Christmas carol "Noel," was charmingly rendered by Miss Bissett. The services concluded with chanting by the Swami.

The Swami's message to us was filled with the love of the dear Christ child whose coming to earth we were celebrating. This Christ spirit is ever with us, filling our hearts, strengthening us in our struggling and striving. It is a never-failing light, ever shining in our hearts and minds; purifying us and illumining all our being, dispelling all darkness and ignorance if we will but let it shine out from our heart of hearts.

The Swami's words were overflowing with tender sympathy and loving understanding and could not fail to give each one of us a deeper understanding of the beauty, simplicity and compassion of the Lord Jesus.

The universal all-including philosophy of Vedanta brings all the the Great Messengers of Divine Mother to us in a very special way. Each has His message for us and it is through the broad and deep and never-ending wisdom of Vedanta that our hearts can learn to know these Messengers and to love each and all of them more truly than before.

A WESTERN DISCIPLE

### BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

The Sixty Fourth Birthday Anniversary of Swami Vivekananda was celebrated in the Ramakrishna Math, Madras, on the 10th January, 1926, according to the usual programme. A fine large sized photo of the Swamiji, decorated with flowers and greens, was placed on an altar in the front hall and pooja and offerings were performed. By about nine bhajana parties and devotees about 400 assembled and to the accompaniment of musical instruments bhajana and dancing were conducted till about one o'clock. About 1,500 poor Narayanas were sumptuously fed in the Mylapore market and the assembled devotees took prasad in the Math. In the evening lectures on the life and message of the Swamiji were delivered, in Tamil by Mr. P. Manickaswami Mudaliar, B. A., and in English by Dewan Bahadur (now Sir) T. Vijayaraghavachariar. Swami Sharvanandaji, the President of the meeting in his concluding speech drew special attention to the present condition of the Hindu society and how it is to be reformed in the light of Swamiji's teachings and to the excellence of the methods suggested by the great Apostle of Hinduism. Prasad was then distributed to the assembled devotees and at 7 P. M. the function was successfully concluded.

The public celebration of the Ninety First Birthday Anniversary of Bhagwan Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated on Sunday the 21st February on a grand scale. Bhajana parties from various parts of the town came in procession with devotees and followers of Sri Ramakrishna in large numbers and filled up the hall. In front of a life size portrait of the Bhagawan beautifully decorated and seated on an altar the devotees made their offerings of fruits and flowers and deeparadhana. Bhajan songs and prayers and dancing to the accompaniment of various musical instruments was then begun which filled the gathering with fervent and tense devotion till one o'clock.

The assembled devotees were then sumptuously fed with the *prasadam* of Sri Ramakrishna. Meanwhile some 4,000 poor Narayanas were being fed in the Mylapore Market. The staff and pupils of the Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home managed the feeding work on both occasions and made it a grand success. At two o'clock, Srīman Guru-murti Rau gave a beautiful Harikatha performance on the wonderful life of the great South Indian Pariah Saint Nandanar which the audience heartily enjoyed. Mr. Seshadri Acharya, Sanskrit Pandit, The Ramakrishna Mission Residential High School, then delivered an interesting and instructive lecture in Tamil on the life and message of Sri Ramakrishna. This was followed by a learned and scholarly discourse in English on the religious experiences of Sri Ramakrishna by Prof. D. Subrahmanya Sarma of the Presidency College, studying them in the light of the experiences of Rishis and saints of the world. The audience was highly pleased with the clear and instructive exposition of the subject. Swami Sharvanandaji in his concluding speech touched upon and explained some points which were not sufficiently explained in the lecture. After Aratrikam and distribution of prasad the gathering dispersed in great joy.

Since writing the above we have received reports of the birthday celebrations from various parts of India, Burma, Malay States, Ceylon, America and other places. We regret we are not able to publish them all here for want of space. Bhagawan Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda are growingly appreciated in all parts of the world and their influence is working out a silent revolution in the minds of thousands. May their blessed names be ever on our lips and their ideal ever in our hearts!

## NOTICES OF BOOKS

**KRISHNA: THE SAVIOUR**, by Prof. T. L. Vaswani. (Garosh & Co., Madras. 1925. Price Rs. 1-8-0).

The world is now in a transitional stage and there are evident signs of a great unrest, an unrest inherent to a transitional stage. The Hindu Dharma which has preserved the Indian people so long is now put to a severe test. It looks as if the nation has lost its moorings and wanders blindfold, no one knows whither. Fortunately we have among Indian thinkers and writers, men of the wisdom of Prof. Vaswani, an enlarged edition of whose essays and addresses on the life and teachings of Sri Krishna, the Divine Flute-player, we have much pleasure in welcoming. The world cannot afford to live eternally on war and violence and it stands very much in need of the message of the Divine Flutist, with its beautiful song of love.



WITNESS OF THE ANCIENT, by Prof. T. L. Vaswani. (Ganesh & Co., Madras. Price As. 4.).

This small pamphlet seeks to place before its readers the realization of the Hindu Ideal of oneness of Life as the panacea for all evils. The necessity for such an ideal is being keenly felt more and more in the West and the author of the pamphlet has emphasised the necessity of the Hindus taking it up more earnestly and spreading it in the West. Ideal must express itself in *shakti* and service of humanity. The pamphlet will pay the perusal amply.

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THE THIRUVAYMOZHI OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA : PART I. (Published by the Yogananda Ashrama, Alleppy. Price 14 as.).

This is a direct translation into Malayalam of the original *Ramakrishna Kathamrita* in Bengali recorded by the disciple of Sri Ramakrishna now famous as M. The translations are rendered in simple, chaste, and idiomatic *Malayalam*, keeping close to the sense of the original. The book, we need hardly say, is a great boon to the Malayalees.

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SRI NARADA BHAKTI SUTRAM. (Published by Yogananda Ashrama, Alleppy. Price 3 as.).

The book contains, besides the Sutras, an amplified paraphrase as well as the commentary of Krishnanda Swami in *Malayalam*. This book is a real and new acquisition in the Shastra of devotion for the religious literature in *Malayalam*. We wish the Sutras had been given in bolder or bigger type. We hope the next edition will remove the defect.

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SWAMI VIVEKANANDA ON RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY. (Compiled by Swami Nirvedananda and published from the Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, 7, Halder Lane, Calcutta. Price 12 as.).

The book contains a good many brilliant and choice passages from the Swami's writings and speeches classified under topical heads. We are sure the book will be of much usefulness for ready reference to those who want to know Swamiji's ideas on any special topic.

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IN QUEST OF GOD, by Ramdas. (Published by P. Ganesh Rau, Gouri Mutt Street, Mangalore. Price 8 as.).

The book chronicles the first struggles of the author to emancipate from the bondages of *samsara*, his renunciation and wandering life as a Sadhu in various holy places. The book is full of interesting anecdotes, instances of God's grace and surrender to His will and gives an insight into the life of a wandering Indian monk.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Swami Ghanananda started from Madras on the 24th August last year on a tour through Coimbatore, Salem and Malabar Districts, with the main object of popularising the ideas and ideals of the Mission through publications and journals. At the invitation of the public, he also delivered lectures in Udumalpet, Pollachi, Coimbatore, Peelamedu, Salem, Namakkal, Velur, Calicut and other places on topics such as 'Education and Human Personality,' 'An Ideal Educational Training for Indian Students,' 'Objects, Ideals, and Activities of the Ramakrishna Mission,' 'Vedanta in Individual, National and International Life,' and 'The Place of Religion in National Life.' The Swami came back to Madras on the 17th December. The Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras, thanks one and all those who evinced deep sympathy with and interest in the ideals of the Mission by generously subscribing for the journals, *The Vedanta Kesari* and *The Ramakrishna Vijayam* and also making voluntary donations towards the work of the Math and helping him in other ways. A list of the donations is given below:—

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1.	M. R. Ry. P. Sundara Gounder Avl., P. K. P. & Sons, Pollachy	...	200	0 0
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स जातो भूतान्यभिव्यैख्यत्किमिहान्यं वावदिषदिति । स एतमेव पुरुषं  
ब्रह्म तत्तममपश्यदिदमदर्शमिति ॥ १३ ॥

स He (God) जातः being born (in the form of Jeeva) भूतानि all beings अभिव्यैख्यत् comprehended, expressed by comprehension, इह here, in this body, किं what अन्यं other वावदिषत् could proclaim (can I proclaim) सः He एतं this पुरुषं the Purusha एव verily तत्तमं the most pervasive, immanent ब्रह्म Brahman अपश्यत् saw इदं this अदर्शं O, (I) have seen इति thus.

Having been born, He expressed all beings by comprehension, and thought: 'whom else can I proclaim here?' He saw verily this Purusha as the most pervasive Brahman and (said to himself) 'O, I have seen it.'

[NOTE—Grammatically speaking, the first half of the text is very obscure, and so naturally, commentators differ in their interpretations. But as regards the true import of the mantra there need be no doubt. The drift is that Iswara or the Atman when got individualised in Jeeva form expressed or illumined the universe by his comprehension. The object of knowledge (ज्ञेय) wholly depends upon the capacity of knowledge (वित्प्राप्ति) of the subject for its expression (प्रकाशः), for material objects are not self-expressive (परतः प्रकाशः). Hence the relative world is wholly dependent upon the relative consciousness of the individual soul. But the dual vision of subject and object of the relative consciousness appears to be the only truth in the beginning, i.e., while Avidya still clouds the mind. Next, when the soul begins to scrutinise the nature of this object and understand the true meaning of plurality of his visions, he feels Brahman as the only first Principle in the form of a logical necessity. Subsequently what appeared to him first as a mere logical necessity slowly dawns upon his consciousness as its permanent content. And this transmutation, or better evolution of the individual consciousness into Brahman—consciousness is generally called 'realisation of Brahman' and is indicated here by the utterance, 'I have seen it.'

*Having been born*—i.e., having become jeeva and born with the body.

*And thought whom etc:—i.e., the jeeva wanted to see what other Principles besides his own intelligent self, could there be behind this scene of plurality of the sense-universe.*

*He saw this Purusha etc:—i.e., he felt it within his own consciousness, that the intelligent Principle which constitutes his very soul and appeared so long to his mind as an individual entity, is the immanent Principle of all existing objects and is the very be-ing of the universe. Thus he realised Brahman as the most all-pervasive Principle.*

*Purusha—the jeeva is call Purusha because he dwells within this city, Puri, of a body.]*

तस्मादिदन्द्रो नमेदन्द्रो ह वै नाम तमिदन्द्रं सन्तमिन्द्र इत्याचक्षते परोक्षेण । परोक्षप्रिया इव हि देवाः । परोक्षप्रिया इव हि देवाः ॥ १४ ॥

इति तृतीयः खण्डः ॥ ३ ॥

*तस्मात् therefore इदन्द्रः seen as this इदन्द्रः Idandra ह वै verily नाम (His) name. इदन्द्रं सन्तं being Idandra तं Him परोक्षेण indirectly इन्द्र Indra इति thus आचक्षते They call. हि because देवाः gods or respectable persons परोक्षप्रियाः love to be callen by indirect names, इव as if. [The repetition of the last line is to indicate the end of the chapter.]*

Therefore He is seen as this (Idandram). Idandram is verily His name. Though He is Indra, He is indirectly called Indra. It appears all respectable persons love to be called indirectly.

*Seen as this —i.e., realised as this universe.*

*All respectable persons etc.—such as father, mother, teacher and other such persons worthy of reverence, are never called by their own name, but as pappa, mamma, sir, professor etc., and they all like to be called thus, and not by their own names, by their inferiors.*

END OF THE THIRD CHAPTER.

# Aitareya-Upanishad

## PART SECOND.

### CHAPTER 1.

अपक्रामन्तु गर्भिण्यः ।

पुरुषे ह वा अयमादितो गर्भो भवति । यदेतदेतस्मदेतत्सर्वेभ्योऽङ्गो  
म्यस्तेजः संभूतमात्मन्येवाऽऽत्मानं विमर्ति तद्यदा स्त्रियां सिञ्चत्यथैनज्जनयति  
तदस्य प्रथमं जन्म ॥ १ ॥

गर्भिण्यः pregnant women अपक्रामन्तु move away. अयं This jeeva  
ह वा verily आदितः first पुरुषे in man गर्भः germ यत् which एतत् this रेतः  
seed, तत् that एतत् this सर्वेभ्यः all अङ्गेभ्यः from limbs सम्भूतं produced  
तेजः essence of strength, (तत् that) आत्मानं the self, the essence of  
his self आत्मनि in the self, in the body विमर्ति (he) holds, यदा when  
स्त्रियां to women (तत् that) सिञ्चति is deposited अथ then एतत् this  
जनयति produces अस्य its तत् that प्रथमं first जन्म birth.

Let the pregnant women move away. It first becomes  
as a germ in man which is called seed. That is the es-  
sence of strength produced from all the limbs (of the body).  
(Man) holds it in his body (the essence of his) self. When  
he deposits it in the woman, he causes it to be born. That  
is its first birth.

[NOTE:—The belief is that the *jeeva* comes down from the  
*chandra Loka* with the light and rain and enters into food-grain,  
and when the latter is eaten by man, it enters into his body and  
is converted into his seed.

*That is the essence etc.*—semen is considered as the essence  
of man, drawn from all his limbs as it were, in as much as on  
it depends the very virility of man.]

तस्त्रिया आत्मभूयं गच्छति यथा स्वमंगं तथा । तस्मादेनां न हिनस्ति  
साऽस्त्यैतमात्मानमत्र गतं भावयति ॥ २ ॥

स्वं of one's own अङ्गं limbs यथा as तथा so तत् that स्त्रियाः of that  
woman आत्मभूयं incorporated with the self (body). तस्मात् there-

fore एनां her न हिंस्ति does not cause suffering. सा she अत्र here (in her womb) गतं entered अस्य his एतं this आत्मानं self भावयति nourishes.

That (seed) gets incorporated with the body of the woman (just) as her own parts of the body, and therefore it does not cause any suffering to her. She fosters his self thus within her.

सा भावयित्री भावयितव्या भवति तं स्त्री गर्भं विभर्ति सोऽग्र एव कुमारं जन्मनोऽग्रेऽधिभावयति । स यत्कुमारं जन्मनोऽग्रेऽधिभावयत्यात्मानमेव तद्भावयत्येषां लोकानां संतत्या एवं संतता हीमे लोकास्तदस्य द्वितीयं जन्म ॥ ३ ॥

(यस्मात् because) सा she (the wife) भावयित्री the nourisher, (तस्मात् therefore) (सा अपि she also) भावयितव्या should be nourished (protected) स्त्री the woman (wife) तं that गर्भं womb विभर्ति bears, सः he अग्रे before (the birth) एव verily कुमारं the child जन्मनः of birth अधि after भावयति exalts (by purification), सः he जन्मनः अग्रे before the birth यत् what अधिभावयति exalts, तत् that आत्मानं his self एवं verily भावयति exalts. एषां these लोकानां worlds सन्तत्यै progeny. हि because इमे these लोकाः worlds एवं thus सन्तताः continuous तत् that अस्य its (jeeva's) द्वितीयं second जन्म birth.

(Because) she becomes the maintainer (of his self within her, so she also) should be maintained. The wife bears that womb. He (the father) exalts the child even before and after the birth. He exalts the son before and after the birth, by that he exalts his own self in order to perpetuate this world of progeny. Thus are these worlds of progeny perpetuated. That is its second birth.

*He exalts etc.*—i.e., he purifies the soul of the child by the religious ceremony known as *Jata-karma-Samskaras*, which are performed both during the time of pregnancy as well as after the birth. And in as much as his son is only a re-production of his own self biologically, he exalts himself by exalting his son and grandson.

*Thus are the worlds etc.*—i.e., the line of progeny is perpetuated by these *Samskaras*, because they make them fit to follow the Path of Dharma and thus gain strength. To live through sons and grandsons and so on, is the immortality of a householder.]

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

"Let the lion of Vedanta roar."

"Let me tell you, strength, strength is what we want  
And the first step in getting strength is to uphold  
The Upanishads and believe that 'I am the Atman.'"

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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## VEDANTA AND BUDDHISM

R. KRISHNASWAMI SASTRI, B. A.

### I

IN recent years the view has been gaining ground among writers on Indian philosophy and religion that the Advaita-vada of Sankaracharya is simply Buddhism in disguise. For example, Professor Das Gupta makes the following statement at the end of the first volume of his *History of Indian Philosophy* : "I am led to think that Sankara's philosophy is largely a compound of Vijñānavāda and Sunyavāda, Buddhism with the Upanishad notion of the permanence of Self superadded." Professor Radhakrishnan of Calcutta follows suit with his assertion that "the Advaita Vedanta philosophy has been very much influenced by the Madhymika doctrine." The latest pronouncement on the subject is contained in a paper read before the Bombay Buddhist Society by Mr. Narmada Shanker Mehta and published in *The Indian Social Reformer* of the 21st and 28th of March, 1925. That this view is a gross travesty of facts will be patent to any unprejudiced student of Sankaracharya's Bhashyas. It is the aim of the following essay to disprove this erroneous view by a detailed examination of all the materials available. We shall, to begin with, take up the arguments of Mr. Mehta to whom we express our obligation for his painstaking summary of the evidence bearing on his contention.

At the very commencement of his paper Mr. Mehta contrasts the popular view about Sankara's Mayavāda with the

view of those whom he calls the "intellectuals of India". According to Mr. Mehta the popular view is that "he was a strong opponent of Buddhism" while the view of "the intellectuals" is that the Mayavada of Sankara "is a heresy engrafted on the teaching of the Veda from the Buddhist plant." We take strong exception to this procedure of Mr. Mehta. Are the opponents of Sankara's Advaitavada alone to be counted among "the intellectuals" of India? Evidently, in Mr. Mehta's opinion, Vachaspati Misra, Prakasatman, Appayya Dikshita, Madhusudana Saraswati and other intellectual giants who maintain the tradition of Sankara but who hold the "popular view" about Sankara's Vedanta are not eligible to be placed in the category of India's "intellectuals". The mere statement of such a view carries with it its own refutation.

(स्वरूपाख्यानमेवास्य प्रत्याख्यानं परं स्मृतम्)

We are sorry to find that Mr. Mehta has not here observed the wholesome rule of not placing excessive and exclusive reliance on the opponent's version of a case. The result is that he has, from the very outset, pre-judged the case and has allowed himself to be unduly influenced by the assertions of Sankara's opponents who, we feel constrained to state, betray an extreme lack of philosophic balance in their zeal to score a polemical success. Such a procedure, though excusable in the case of a "mediaeval" dialectician, is absolutely indefensible in one who claims to be fully informed in modern methods of critical research.

## II

The first piece of evidence which Mr. Mehta lets in, in support of his contention that "Sankara's school of Vedanta is Covert Buddhism," consists of the following passages from *Padmapurana* :

मायावादमसच्छास्त्रं प्रच्छन्नं बौद्धमेव च ।

मयैव कथितं देवि कलौ ब्राह्मणरूपिणा ॥

अपार्थं श्रुतिवाक्यानां दर्शयन्लोकगर्हितम् ।

कर्मस्वरूपत्याज्यत्वमत्रैव प्रतिपाद्यते ॥

सर्वकर्मपरिश्रष्टं वैधर्म्यत्वं तदुच्यते ।

पदेशजीवयोरैक्यं मयातु प्रतिपाद्यते ॥

ब्रह्मणोऽस्य स्वयं रूपं निर्गुणं वक्ष्यते मया ।

सर्वस्य जगतोऽप्यत्र मोहनार्थं कलौ युगे ॥

वेदार्थवन्महाशास्त्रं मायया यदवैदिकम् ।

मयैवरक्ष्यते देवि जगतां नाशकारणात् ॥

Before discussing these slokas we have to point out that Mr. Mehta is utterly wrong when he makes the following statement : " The idea that the Vedic ritual was unnecessary for securing salvation as propounded by the new school of Vedanta was an innovation in Hinduism and the Purana alludes to the doctrine as a heresy." In the first place, the *Mundakopanishad* declares in unequivocal language that those who depend upon rituals as the means of securing Moksha are deluded persons .

पूवा ह्येते ह्यदृढा यज्ञरूपाः ।

अष्टादशोक्तमवरं येषुकर्म ॥

एतच्छ्रेयो येऽभिनन्दन्ति मूढाः ।

जराभृत्युं ते पुनरेवापियन्ति ॥

परीक्ष्यलोकान् कर्मचितान् ब्राह्मणो ।

निर्वेदमायान्नास्त्यकृतः कृतेन ॥

When the Veda itself makes such a declaration, it is the height of folly to state that the idea of the inefficacy of rituals as a means to salvation was an " innovation " introduced by the Advaitavadin . In the second place, Sankara's Advaita-vada is no "new school" of Vedanta. It is as old as the Veda as will be shown later on.

We shall now turn our attention to the *Padmapurana* verses extracted above. *Firstly*, it has to be pointed out that serious doubts exist regarding the genuineness of these slokas. In the edition of the *Padmapurana* published by the late Hon'ble Mr. V. N. Mandlik and printed at the Poona Anandashrama Press it is stated, at the foot of page 838, that the verses which refer to Mayavada are to be found in only four manuscripts out of the many collated by the editor. The late Pandit N. Bhashyacharya of the Adyar Library says as follows in his pamphlet on *The Age of Sankaracharya* : " The *Padmottarapurana* contains 64 chapters. In the 42nd chapter we find Siva telling his wife that several people will be born in the *Kali Yuga* and preaching several doctrines and that he himself would incarnate as a Brahmin and would destroy the world by preaching Advaita. The manuscript we have in the Adyar Library is not less than three centuries

old and the Telugu translation of the work is itself more than two. The passages alleged to contain this account cannot be found in any of the editions or manuscript copies of the Puranas." Our readers will now be able to see how much reliance is to be placed on these slokas.

*Secondly*, even a superficial examination of the style and contents of the chapter of the *Padmapurana* in which these verses occur is enough to reveal the fact that they are the fabrications of a mere scribbler. The use of the term "Mayavada" in the neuter gender is quite ungrammatical. Sloka 74 as translated by Mr. Mehta runs as follows: "This Mahasastra which is non-Vedic on account of Maya is preserved by me like the Veda for the destruction of the world." The fabricator was perhaps unaware that the sloka could be made to give a meaning exactly opposite to what he had intended. We may with equal justification interpret the sloka to mean that the Veda and the Mayavada are *both* preserved by God for the destruction of the world.

*Thirdly*, in the *Padmapurana* chapter under discussion, the Smritis of Yajnavalkya, Atri, Daksha, Katyayana and Vishnu are stated to be Rajasic, while those of Gautama, Brihaspati, Samvarta, Yama, Sankha and Usanas are Tamasic and lead to hell (निर्यप्रद). This classification of Smritis into Sattwic, Rajasic and Tamasic is absolutely unknown to the literature of Sanatana Dharma and is further testimony to the spurious character of this entire chapter of the *Purana*.

*Fourthly*, we are in a position to affirm from our knowledge of eight Puranas that such abusive condemnation of the Advaitavada as is found in these slokas is quite opposed to the letter and spirit of the Puranas. There are innumerable Pauranic passages extolling Sankara and his Advaitavada. The following slokas from the *Vayu Purana* which are quoted in works on Advaita Vedanta may be mentioned in this connection :

चतुर्भिः सहशिष्यैस्तु शङ्करोऽवतरिष्यति ।

व्याकुर्वन् व्याससूत्रार्थं श्रुतेरर्थं यथोच्चिवान् ॥

श्रुतेन्यास्यः स एवार्थः शङ्करः सवितानन ।

For our own part, we are not prepared to place implicit reliance on such Pauranic passages. Though the Puranas form an integral part of Aryan sacred literature, the extant texts show unmistakable evidence of having been tampered

with in mediæval times. That is why we have reason to think that Sankaracharya, while fully recognising the authority of the Puranas (मन्त्रार्थवादेतिहासपुराणप्रामाण्यात्) did not base his doctrine solely on their authority. We have to note also the significant fact that Bhatta Bhaskara, a hostile critic of Sankara's Advaitavada who flourished before the ninth century A. D., shows no knowledge of these *Padma Purana* slokas while Vijñanabhikṣu of the 16th century quotes them with evident satisfaction.

*Fifthly and lastly*, the author of these *Padma Purana* slokas seems to be under the impression that the Mayavada of Sankaracharya was a new innovation introduced into the Vedanta philosophy by Sankaracharya (and his teacher's teacher Gaudapada) under the influence of Buddhism. We shall now proceed to show that this view has no foundation, in fact. We shall convincingly show later on that the Mayavada is taught by the Upanishads both expressly and by implication. Dr. Prabhu Datta Sastri of Calcutta has shown in his *Doctrine of Maya* that even passages in the Vedas contain the germs of Mayavada. Sankaracharya's enduring glory consists in the fact that he has, once for all, given a finished, reasoned and systematic exposition of the doctrine and a convincing refutation of all adverse criticisms. Even here he had the supreme authority of *Sampradaya* (tradition) behind him, as we shall now proceed to show—

(1) Gaudapada, Sankara's teacher's teacher, had already prepared the ground by giving to the world his *Karikas* on the *Mandukyopanishad*. The absurd notion that Gaudapada himself might have been a Buddhist will be refuted at length later on. Sankara's characterization of him as *Pedantarthasampradaya* is highly significant. Gaudapada was not merely the knower of the Vedanta but he was also well acquainted with the Vedantic tradition handed down from time immemorial by an uninterrupted succession of teachers. Sankara himself repeatedly refers to the supreme importance of *Sampradaya* (tradition). In his *Gita Bhashya* he says :

सर्वशास्त्रविदपि असंप्रदायविन्मूर्खैवदुपेक्षणीयः ॥

Elsewhere he says in the same work :

सत्यमेवं गुरुसंप्रदायरहितानामश्रुतवेदान्तानामत्यंतबहिर्विषयाक्तबुद्धीनां  
सम्यक्प्रमाणेष्वकृतश्रमाणां

In his *Brihadaranyakabhāṣya* (II-i) he says :

“अनुकंपनीया आगमार्थविच्छिन्नसंप्रदायबुद्धयः”

And from the introductory verses of his *Taittiriyaabhāṣya* we clearly see that, long before the time of Sankara, all the Upanishads had been commented upon by a successive line of Acharyas of the Advaita school :

यैरिमे गुरुभिः पूर्वं पदवाक्यप्रमाणतः ।

व्याख्याताः सर्ववेदान्ताः तान्नित्यं प्रणतोऽस्यहम् ॥

(2) Kumarila Bhatta in his *Slokavartika* often takes up the Advaitic doctrine for criticism. He says (page 169 of the *Slokavartika*, Chaukhamba Press edition) :

“महासामान्यमन्यैस्तु द्रव्यं सदितिचोच्यते”

On this, the commentator Parthasarathi Misra says :

“वेदान्तिनस्तु महासामान्यमेव सत्ताद्रव्यशब्दाभिलष्यनिर्विकल्पकस्य विषयमाहुरित्याह”

In another place (page 663 *ibid*) Kumarila says as follows :

“स्वयञ्च शुद्धरूपत्वादसत्त्वाच्चान्यवस्तुनः ।

स्वप्नादिवदविद्यायाः प्रवृत्तिस्तस्यैकं कृता ॥

अन्येनोपप्लवेऽभीष्टे द्वैतवादः प्रसज्यते ।

स्वाभाविकीमविद्यां तु नोऽछेतुं कश्चिदर्हति ॥

विलक्षणोपपाते हि नश्येत्स्वाभाविकी कश्चित् ।

नत्वेकात्माभ्युपायानां हेतुरस्ति विलक्षणः ॥

The remarks of the commentator hereon are as follows :

“येत्वाहुः नैवं परिणामं ब्रूमः किन्त्वपरिणत एवासावविद्यावशेन परितमिव प्रपञ्चरूपेणात्मानं स्वप्नवत्प्रपश्यतीति तान् प्रत्याह ॥”

This shows that the Mayavada had been so well established in Kumarila's days that he deemed it important to criticise it in his works. Kumarila, as we all know, preceded Sankara by about two generations.

(3) Bhartrihari, the celebrated grammarian and author of *Vakyapadiya*, a masterly treatise on the philosophy of grammar, makes constant reference, and that with perfect approval, to Advaita views. In the third Kanda of his *Vakyapadiya* he says :

सत्य वस्तु तदाकारैरसत्यैरवधार्यते ।  
 असत्योपाधिभिः शब्दैः सत्यमेवाभिधीयते ॥  
 अध्रुवेण निमित्तेन देवदत्तगृहं यथा ।  
 गृहीतं गृहशब्देन शुद्धमेवाभिधीयते ॥  
 सुवर्णादि यथाभिन्नं स्वैराकारैरपायिभिः ।  
 रक्काद्यभिधानानां शुद्धमेवैति वाच्यताम् ॥  
 न तत्वातत्त्वयोर्भेद इति बृद्धेभ्य आगमः ।  
 अतत्त्वमिति मन्यन्ते तत्त्वमेवाविचारितम् ॥  
 विकल्परूपं भजते तत्त्वमेवाविकल्पितम् ।  
 न चात्रकालभेदोऽस्ति कालभेदश्च गृह्यते  
 आत्मापरः प्रियो द्वेष्यो वक्ता वाच्यं प्रयोजनम् ।  
 विरुद्धानि यथैकस्य स्वप्ने रूपाणि चेतसः ॥  
 अजन्मनि तथा नित्ये पौर्वापर्यविवर्जिते ।  
 तत्त्वं जन्मादिरूपत्वं विरुद्धमुपलभ्यते ॥

(वाक्यपदीये<sup>2</sup>—18 द्रव्यसमुद्देशे)

Here Bhatrihari makes it quite clear that the Philosophy of Grammar is none other than the Advaitavada. Helaraja's comments on these slokas deserve careful consideration. Historians are agreed that Bhatrihari was anterior to Kumarila Bhatta.

(4) Brahmanandin is a very ancient writer on Vedanta. He is known as the *Chandogyavakyakara*. Vedantic writers of all schools appeal to his authority with equal reverence. Ramanuja mentions him in his *Vedarthasangraha*; Bhatta Bhaskara quotes him in his *Brahmasutrabhashya*; Sarvajnatman, Sankara's disciple's disciple, refers to him in his *Samkshepasareeraka* (III-217). In his commentary on *Samkshepasareeraka* (III-217) Madhusudana Saraswati quotes the following passage from Brahmanandin :

नासत उत्पत्तिरनिष्पाद्यत्वात् नापिसतः प्रवृत्त्यानर्थक्यात् ॥ सत्त्वाविशेषात् ॥  
 अभिव्यक्त्यर्थमिति चेन्न ॥ तस्या अपि सत्त्वात् ॥ प्रवृत्ति नित्यत्वाच्च  
 सदाभिव्यक्तिप्रसंगः ॥ न ॥ संव्यवहारमात्रत्वात् ॥”

The same passage is quoted in a slightly abbreviated form by Amalananda in his *Kalpataru*. (I-i-27) where he reproaches

Bhaskara for misquoting and misrepresenting the views of the *Chandogyavakyakara*. From this it will be clear to any unprejudiced reader that Brahmanandin is an out and out adherent of the Mayavada school of Vedanta. We may, in passing, remark that in the light of these words of Brahmanandin there is no need whatsoever to find out a Buddhist origin for the *Ajativada* of Gaudapada.

(5) Dravidacharya was the author of the Bhashya on Brahmanandin's work. He also is mentioned with respect both by Advaitins and Visishtadvaitins. Sankara refers to him twice in his *Chandogyabhashya* as *Acharya* (III-10-3 and IV-2-3). In the *Brihadaranyakabhashya* he is said to be a *Sampradaya* and the author of the celebrated story of a prince brought up by a hunter and restored to his rightful position after the discovery by a kindly person of his real origin.

(न्यायकुलसंवर्धितराजकुमाराख्यायिका)

The story is narrated to prove the essential identity of *Jiva* and *Brahman* and it can retain its significance only in an Advaitic setting.

(6) Asvaghosha, the celebrated Buddhist poet and philosopher, shows in his *Buddhacharitakavya* an intimate acquaintance with Mayavada. We are indebted to our learned friend Pandit K. G. Natesa Sastri, M. R. A. S., Vaidya Visarada of the Mylapore Venkatramana Dispensary for the following quotations from Asvaghosha's *Buddhacharita* :

द्रष्टा श्रोताच मंताच कार्यं करणमेवच ।  
 अहमित्येवमागम्य संसारे परिवर्तते ॥  
 इत्येवं हेतुभिर्धीमन् तमः स्रोतः प्रवर्तते ।  
 हेत्वभावे फलाभाव इति विज्ञातुमर्हसि ॥  
 इत्यर्थं ब्राह्मणा लोके परमब्रह्मवादिनः  
 ब्रह्मचर्यं चरन्तीह ब्राह्मणान् वासयन्ति च  
 अध्यात्मकुशलेष्वन्यो निवर्त्यात्मानमात्मना  
 किञ्चिन्नास्तीति संपश्यन् नाकिञ्चन्य इति स्मृतः  
 ततो मुञ्जादिपीकेव शकुनिः पञ्जरादिव  
 क्षेत्रज्ञो निःसृतोदेहान्मुक्त इत्यभिधीयते  
 एतत्तत्परमं ब्रह्म निर्लिङ्गं ध्रुवमक्षरम् ॥

(Canto 12, Stanzas 32 to 65)

The above slokas succinctly express the Advaitic doctrine of *Avidya*. The portions underlined therein are mere paraphrases of *Brihadaranyaka* and *Mundaka Upanishad* passages. We can see now that in the days of Asvaghosha the Advaita-vada was fully known to the "intellectuals" of India. Though the age of Asvaghosha is still to a large extent uncertain, nobody has assigned him to a date posterior to the 4th century A. D. (*Vide* Prof. V. V. Sovani's Introduction to *Buddha Charita* where twelve different views are given regarding the age of Kanishka and his contemporary Asvaghosha); and this date is anterior by centuries to the date which our Orientalists have thought proper to assign to Sankara. From the above detailed reference to six representative writers of different times we can take it as proved beyond the shadow of doubt that the Mayavada is no new-fangled innovation introduced for the first time into the Vedānta philosophy by Sankara and his immediate predecessor Gaudapada. By asserting that it was Siva in the person of Sankara who *first* promulgated the doctrine of Maya, the author of these interpolated slokas of the *Padma Purana* has put himself entirely out of court as a trustworthy guide in matters historical. It is a pity that a scholar like Mr. Mehta should have chosen to depend upon this broken reed for support in his campaign against the Mayavada of Sankaracharya.

R. KRISHNASWAMI SASTRI, B. A.

(To be continued)

## SWAMI VIVEKANANDA : THE APOSTLE OF UNIVERSAL RELIGION\*

SWAMI PRAKASHANANDA

**T**O-DAY we are celebrating the Birthday Anniversary of our illustrious leader, Swami Vivekananda, one of the greatest master-minds this world has produced in this modern age. He was a unique combination of education of the West and the spiritual genius of the East. A man amongst men, he towered above all humanity to give his message to the modern world.

Year after year we celebrate his memory to get fresh inspiration, a new impetus. Many may not see its significance, but if you pause and stop in the midst of the hurry and scurry of life, to study the aim and purpose of our life ; to ponder over the object of our varied existence here, you will see that it is the most vital and important thing in our life to place before our mind's eye from time to time the great ideals and the message they represent. Such study alone can serve as a respite in the struggle of life, bringing to us a soothing relief in the midst of our troubles. The study of such lives alone can enlighten us in regard to the very philosophy of life ; that is why it is so vital, so important. We may lag behind in our struggles ; we may give up hope ; we may feel there is no chance in life to get ahead, that we have to throw ourselves into the vortex of conditions as they come and go, and move like machines, but the study of such lives fills our whole being with a new inspiration ; it fills us with courage and great hope that on this battlefield of life we need not give up, that we can rise again and again and face the problems of life with greater strength.

That is why we are here this morning to place before our mind's eye, the life of this great man and his message. A man of magnetic personality ; a man of versatile genius and marvellous eloquence that the world has ever seen. These are all now records of history. Many of you may have seen him in those aspects of life ; many of his teachings have been compiled in books ; and as the years roll by we begin to understand a little of his contribution to the world's civilization. His gift to the world in this modern age is unique. It is a

\*A lecture delivered in San Francisco.

message of the universal type. The dominant note of his message was the Ideal of a universal religion. Very few can understand it and that too superficially; you fail to comprehend its depth and significance unless you study it again and again and try to live a little of it in your practical daily life and spiritual culture.

Swami Vivekananda came to this country with that message and delivered it in his own way before that great assembly almost thirty-three years ago, when the great Parliament of Religions was held in connection with the World's Fair in Chicago, in 1893. But to quote his own words when he wrote to an American disciple in this vein: "You are mistaken if you think I have a work. . . . I have a message and I will give it after my own fashion. I will neither Hinduize the message nor Christian-ize it, but I will My-ize it." Here you can see he did not like to give his message hampered and bound by any sectarian dogmas of religion, but he wanted to give his message from the standpoint of the universal aspect of wisdom, from which realm, Christianity, Hinduism, Mohammedanism and all the other religions of the world get their inspiration, light and wisdom. He wanted to stand on a platform wherefrom he could have a comprehensive view of all the religions of the world and give new life to all of them.

His was the genius to study each religion and to study its best side and its worst side; study its essence, the real meaning and purpose; at the same time study its narrowness, sectarian bigotry and so forth. He wanted to throw an illuminating wisdom on the varied aspects of the different religions of the world. Unless and until we are sincere and earnest, and try to follow religious culture step by step, we may fail to understand his contribution; but if you will open your eyes to the spiritual world of to-day and if you will study the different religions in their varied aspects, you will see in this modern age, how we are gradually rising above narrowness, bigotry and the sectarian spirit. Really there is an attempt everywhere, most of all in every church, in every temple, institution, as it were, to rise above the narrowness and get the broader view; get a wider understanding; get more unity and harmony amongst the sects. As years go by, this impetus, this urge, this spirit is being felt slowly and surely. In many cases the world never acknowledges the gifts from the great men of the world; the greatest men have been persecuted and ignored in every field, but it makes no difference.

One great thought, one great idea, one great message coming from that Eternal Fountainhead, is as eternal as the source. It may be given out in the solitude of the cave, or open air of the mountain; it must go on and pierce thick veils of life and it will work out its influence. And so you will see to-day how ideas are broadening out. I will not attempt this morning to place before you all the aspects of his life. You can read them and I want you to read them. Why? Because of the inspiration you will gain in reading them; to draw more light from the study of such lives. How he had gone through struggles, not only for himself, but struggles created by other religions and difficulties thrown in his way by others, to realize his ideal and spread his message in India as well as in this country; how the so-called leaders of Christianity and other religions, being hide-bound by their narrowness and prejudice, tried to throw all kinds of difficulties in his way, how he rose like a man and conquered and presented his life-message in his own unique way—you may study these things for yourself, but I want to present before you a few points of his great message, which remain his special contribution to the modern world and the world needs it more than ever to-day. Our vaunted learning requires it; our pretended unity and harmony require it and the dream of the world-peace requires it and so I want to present to you a little of this message, his ideal of universal religion, and we shall be benefited by it and rise above narrowness and bigotry. You may belong to different faiths, different religions, and hold different ideas, but as he said often: the object of his mission is to make a Christian a better Christian; a Hindu a better Hindu, a Mahomedan a better Mahomedan, that is, to make a man a better man. It is to lift a business man into a higher understanding of business life in its relation to life's goal; to make in every field better men and women; and that is the correct interpretation of the universal aspect of his life and he left this as a legacy to us.

In order to study a religion you have to study two things: the Personality of the founder of the religion, and the revealed Book which teaches religion or which records the experiences of religious men and women. It has been the great dream of many great men in this world, of many great souls, to break the barrier of all sorts of sectarian feelings, bring harmony into the world and establish one religion, and there are two ways in which it can be done, as explained and interpreted by our illustrious leader, Swami Vivekananda. Study two things,

as I said. The great founder of the religion; the personality from which we draw inspiration for our life, culture and spiritual progress. Christianity in its varied forms, different denominations, different sects, may disagree on minor articles of faith, may have different non-essential details, but all point to that one great central idea, the Christ Ideal, the personality of the Great One of Galilee. The historicity of Christ may be doubted by some; the divinity of this Ideal may be interpreted by others differently, but they all revolve around that one great central Light, the Christ Ideal. But whenever you attempt to build a universal religion on one personal Ideal, you fail. Why? Others may have the privilege, or may have that light and understanding within themselves to look upon another personal Ideal in the same spirit. Take for instance the Buddhists, who look on Buddha as the great Ideal; a man amongst men, surrounded by all luxuries of the palace, with all comforts and conveniences, at a moment's notice renouncing everything for the welfare of humanity, to lift humanity above the realm of ignorance and delusion, and it is no wonder that millions look on Him as a God-man. If we just travel along the path of time and study different centuries and ages we come across brilliant luminaries in the form of great Messengers of Light, such as Krishna and others, and there have been followers of such great men. However much you may like one religion and criticize others, the history of the world will show to you with no uncertain light, that there have been many divine personalities—God-men. Out of your prejudice you may try to ignore history and live in your own narrow realm, but time will show to you it is the vain attempt of man—wild dream of man—influenced by fanaticism and narrow bigotry, to uphold one and reject the others and so the different religions exist. And these different personalities come to us and try to impress upon our minds different aspects of the Divine Wisdom according to the necessity of the age in which they appear. But there is one danger and difficulty—that we remain bound by the personality and we stop there.

The object of religious culture is not to bind you anywhere; it is to lead you into the realm of freedom; to lead you to that plane of Divine illumination where all contradictions cease, bondages melt away. Well has it been sung by the Vedic Sages : "When That which is in the high as well as in the low, when that supreme, divine and universal Spirit is realized, all binding limitations of our hearts are torn asunder;

we rise above bondage and above all struggles and we feel the thrill of the joy of freedom and perfection." So religion to be universal—in the true sense of the word—cannot be bound by individuals or by any personalities. A religion, in order to be universal, must be built on the principle, essence and intelligence of Godhead in its highest aspect; at the same time we must recognize the importance of our stages of growth and understanding and of our need of personal Ideals. As long as we are bound by limitations of name and form, we need the inspiration of the personal and concrete idea to hold on to. We cannot understand the abstract, we cannot grasp the Absolute; these conceptions are all right but too high, meaningless to us. We need a Christ held before us, a prophet and messenger; a great leader; and that is why a religion in which we are brought up is all right, but if you assert that your religion is going to take the place of universal religion by supplanting all other religions, you are dreaming vain dreams, because it cannot be done. Most of you will differ in your ideas this moment, so how can you expect the world to accept one idea? There is the importance of different religions, because we have to understand the Truth in different ways. But first of all try to understand that in order to be universal it must include all these, must accept not only Christ but all of them. The followers of Mahomed may not be able to accept Jehovah; the followers of Christ may not be able to accept Buddha and that is why the world is in trouble to day. Religious fanaticism is not always based on true devotion but mostly on narrowness and blinding ignorance.

Religion, in order to be universal, must be based on a principle which will be a common one to all, and yet at the same time accept all, because each Messenger of Light is a channel through which Divine Wisdom flows and can impress on different sections of humanity, different ideals of wisdom and virtue. The same way with the Book. You come forward and want others to accept the Bible as the one great book, as the only revealed scripture. Not a few would assert the Talmud as the revealed book; others declare the Vedas or Zend-Avesta as the greatest book the world has produced; what would you do? You might carry the Bible with sword and gun, that would not work; you might carry with victory your other books to other parts of the world, but that would not work. The world has seen again and again that force will not avail—vain are these attempts. There is something in

man, the Divine principle—or what name you choose to give it—which rebels; it rises against such force and force has always failed and it will always fail, notwithstanding our talking for or against it. Why? We have to use our common sense after all. All these books are good, great and grand, and contain many of the most wonderful teachings, yet all of them may not contain all teachings. According to the necessity of the age, these books and writings were collected and they apply to their period in the world culture and they have their place, but a universal religion cannot be based on one particular book. If one book can be called revealed, then in the collected Divine Wisdom of years and years, there can be many, many books.

In the words of the great philosopher; “man who had risen above all the bondages of life and had touched that Fountainhead, his words are the inspired wisdom and knowledge; they may be expressed in any language, interpreted in any way you like, they will dispel the doubts of the heart and reveal Truth.” Or as we read in some of the writings of the Vedas: “The object of the spiritual culture is not to bind you to one book, or the realm of books, but to take you to a plane of realization where books are left behind as insufficient, where Vedas, Bibles, become no Vedas, no Bibles.” That means it not only recognizes the importance of the study of such books, but that the object of spiritual culture is to lead you into the realm where you rise above the intellectual plane, you come in touch with Divine Wisdom and knowledge. Has it not been said, you have to see God, you have to know God? That is the object of the true spiritual culture and not to remain bound in the realm of books.

Religion in order to be universal, would show you the way to that realm or plane, at the same time recognises the importance, the vital necessity, not only of the Bible but of all other Bibles in the world. Religion in order to be universal should be broad, it should be as broad as the heavens above and as deep as the ocean beneath. Religion in order to be universal, would recognize and would know God as Infinite and infinite are the ways of expressing God. From the highest infinity to the lowest strata of life, all the aspects are to be recognized and why? Because we are, as it were, children and babies standing before the gate and trying to enter and reach the road of knowledge. Different persons may stand on different steps of the ladder and each step may represent a different aspect. Your vision may be different

from mine; you may have a narrower vision; a person on another plane may have a wider, broader conception; that is why God can be looked upon as Father, Mother, Friend or our Beloved. Also from a higher standpoint, God with all the attributes of the blessed qualities by which we try to describe Him appears to be limited. How can you express the Absolute in terms which are limited, which are so inadequate ?

Religion in order to be universal must include all these aspects and why ? It must have room for all minds, all types, all stages. A religion which would teach only the devotional side, is not sufficient ; or only knowledge, or only the philosophy of right activity, or contemplation is not sufficient. All these aspects can be called particular ways of divine communion. And above all, religion to be universal, must offer a chance to all, knowing that each soul is a centre of that Divine Light and various are the ways by which man can unfold. In this way you will see how all these various aspects are necessary and that each of these particular religions cannot take the place of a universal religion. That is why all these are required. If there should be a universal religion, how can you express it ? The modern times have produced such a man whose whole life was the expression of universality. Our illustrious leader has shown how the teachings of the Vedanta have embodied all the requisites of a universal religion ; he also tried to express the universality from another view-point by keeping all the religions intact and recognizing the unity and harmony of purpose in all of these. Sects may be necessary, different paths may be necessary, but sectarianism is not necessary. A centre may be only one, but infinite are the roads converging to that same centre ; there may be one mountain peak but there are different trails. So we belong to different faiths and religions; we may keep our own paths to follow, but at the same time, we are all wending toward the same goal by different paths.

Fanaticism is misguided genius ; it is blinding, it is deluding. We can be devoted to our own religion, at the same time may give others liberty to follow their ideals. So recognising unity back of all variety, we can have universal religion in a different sense. It does not insist on any one religion; it is the recognition, understanding of the privileges of others, lending a helping hand to each other; it is finding that we are all brothers and sisters, travellers on the path of spiritual culture: no necessity of fight, conversion or

criticism, but necessity of understanding more than finding fault.

In the present age there came one whose whole life was the embodiment of universal religion. As far back as we can go into ancient history, we come to the teachings of the ancient Vedic wisdom where we may read : "There is but one God but the sages call Him by various names." We come down the corridor of time and see a great man in the personality of Sri Krishna and here we observe that thought-germ of the Vedic sages manifesting as a little plant. When we read such expressions of Sri Krishna as "Those who follow different ways earnestly and sincerely, they are following My path because I reach them in their own way," we notice there undoubtedly a little but growing plant. We are children of God and following different roads, different forms of worship. It was reserved for the present age to produce Sri Ramakrishna, who was the embodiment of universal religion; and to him came the followers of all religions outside the bounds of Hinduism, and found in him the unity of all these faiths. Like a big tree this plant has grown, giving shade and comfort to so many; in his presence they forgot their differences a children of God. We are all children of God.

Our great leader sitting at the blessed feet of Sri Ramakrishna and following His foot-steps, has spread this universal religion over the world. All his teachings were uttered within a few years, but as centuries roll on they will be unfolded. Already the distant murmur of the tidal wave is reaching our ears, carrying humanity above the narrow bounds of sectarianism, bigotry and persecution, to the realm of safe harbour of unity of understanding and harmony. May He who is Ahura Mazda of the Zoroastrians, Father in heaven of the Christians, Jehovah of the Jews, Allah of the Muhammedans and Brahman, Divine Mother of the Hindus, may He who is God of all nations, God of the universe, give us more light and understanding. Above all, may He give us more sincerity and earnestness to carry this harmony and universality into our daily lives.

SWAMI PRAKASHANANDA

## SRI RAMAKRISHNA : HIS SADHANAS

### A DEVOTEE

THE truths of religion depend ultimately on facts of personal experience. It is the concrete life of spiritual genius that gives meaning and validity to the concepts of religion. The best proof of the being of God lies in the being in God. Religion is the science of specialisation in God. It is neither a blind dogma nor an empty formula but a concrete realization. The godliness that is unfolded in the life of a saint is the only test of the God of abstract philosophy. The science of religion is an inductive process which eliminates the local and the accidental in the varieties of spiritual experience and thereby establishes its essential laws. It is the negative method of *Neti Neti*, in which the self is discovered by the elimination of the non-self. The seeker after God has first to abandon the false values of sense and sensibility before he attains oneness with the Infinite who is the real source as well as the goal of life. The finite perishing things of life ought to be renounced before the Eternal is realised. In this way his personality is annexed to or merged in the Divine and becomes His surest witness.

The life of Sri Ramakrishna affords an inspiring example, in modern times, of the manifold ways of mystic experience and the synthetic insight into their common goal. He summed up in his life the strivings of every sect and faith and sought their underlying unity and harmony. To him religion was an organic craving for God, and his whole being throbbed with the pulse of the spirit. Just as the physical organism has its own wants and appetites, so does the spiritual nature hunger and thirst for God and follow its peculiar laws. To the secular-minded, accustomed to interpret experience in the language of sensibility and reason, the nature and meaning of such mystic experience must remain a mystery. We can only explore the outskirts of spiritual struggle and realization and employ human analogies to know what is really beyond our understanding. The objective phenomena associated with the extraordinary life, especially in the Sadhana stage, supply a large mass of external evidence, and enable us to have some insight into the inner workings.

The story of Sri Ramakrishna's Sadhana for twelve strenuous years as recorded by his disciples is a sublime unfolding of the burning zeal and devotional pathos so characteristic of the seeker after truth. Says the saint himself referring to this period of his life, "For six years I could not drop the eyelids, however much I might try to do so. I had no idea of time nor of the body. Let this body go to pieces, but Mother leave we not." Unmindful of hunger, thirst and other organic cravings and unaffected by the environment, he was seized with a mad thirst for God and felt a burning sensation all over the body on account of the agony of separation. He would often sit motionless like a statue, lost in Divine meditation when even breathing was suspended and the normal functions of life were at a standstill. When the bodily functions are thus apparently suspended and inhibited, the soul becomes fully alive and awake to the reality of God. When the spiritual storm rages over the body, the senses swoon away, the mind is tossed and torn and the soul is seized with inexpressible fits of agony and depression alternating with the uprushes of exaltation.

The saint had a characteristic way of practising self-renouncement and ridding himself root and branch of the *vasanas* of lucre and lust. Self-control was not a case of ascetic self-mortification and suppression with him. It was not the alienation of the senses that he practised but alienation from the senses. Renunciation of earthly values and realization of the Supreme were the negative and positive aspects of the same spiritual process. To abolish the sense of economic and secular values, he resorted to a novel method which has now become classic in mystic literature, by which he would take some clod of earth in one hand and some silver coins in the other, establish an association in his mind regarding their absolute worthlessness in the realization of God, and finally consign both to the Ganges. His body would automatically recoil from contact with money and other sense values as naturally as it would respond to a Divine call or stimulus. He used to touch sand and filth and thus recognise their equal futility in spiritual consciousness. To abolish the sense of status and superiority, he would often wash unclean places like a professional sweeper. With a view to eliminate sex consciousness, he would suggest to himself that he was a woman, and dress and move like women. His woman devotees often remarked that they 'always considered him as one of their own

sex and as their best confidant'. To a question of Girish Ghosh, "Sir, are you a man or a woman?" he smilingly replied, "Well, I really don't know." He would regard every man and woman as a living manifestation of the Divine Mother and it is recorded by his disciples that the performance of a Tantric practice known as *Shodashi Puja* whereby he one day worshipped his own wife as the Mother, was the crowning consummation of all his Sadhanas. Though Sarada Devi was with her husband almost under the same roof in Dakshineswar for eight months, the minds of the divine couple were attuned to the Infinite and never came down to the plane of sense.

It will be of absorbing interest to students of Bhakti Yoga to know the external symptoms of his irrepressible yearning for the ecstasy of Divine love and touches. He developed a mad thirst for the sight of the Divine Mother of Dakshineswar. In the agony of his separation from Her he would weep profusely like a child and rub his face against the ground. He would moan like a man suffering from an attack of colic and sing songs opening the flood-gate of his heart. Owing to the rush of blood caused by his surging emotions, his chest and face always looked flushed. He felt as if somebody was squeezing his heart like a wet towel and found himself literally guided day and night by another being. He would in his Divine intoxication offer flowers to the Mother after touching his feet with them, and lie on Her bedstead. Sometimes he would sit like a statue engrossed in meditation and could hear strange rattling sounds in his joints from the ankle upwards as if somebody locked them up one by one so that the body might remain in his fixed posture. One day in the excess of his depression he seized the sword from the temple and strange to say the Divine Mother intervened and revealed Herself, and the saint swooned away in ecstasy.

At another period he yearned for a vision of Sri Rama and Sita and with a view to focus his infinite devotional energy and attain the right attitude of a *dasa*, he fancied himself to be Hanuman and began to eat and live like him. He would jump from place to place, live on roots and fruits alone and pass most of his time on trees. What a man thinks, that he becomes and it is said that he had actually an enlargement of the coccyx by about an inch. He thought that his 'life was one long series of woe, because he saw the eternally suffering Sita first of all.'

In this way he tried to realise the other *bhavas* of devotion mentioned by Sri Chaitanya, such as Sakya, Vatsalya, Santa, etc. The practice of *vaidhi bhakti*, the science of devotion insisting on rigid formulas and disciplines, was gradually followed by *prema bhakti* in which mental effort was superseded by spontaneity and transcendental love. The saint at this stage was seized with a passion for the *Maha Bhava*, the synthesis of all the other *Bhavas* of devotion, attained only by Radha and Sri Chaitanya before him. Dressing like a woman, he considered himself a *Gopi* of Brindavan and soon became overpowered by the intoxication of love for Krishna. For six months he was lost in mad frenzy and spiritual agony. He felt a strange burning sensation all over his body and 'minute drops of blood began to ooze out from the pores of his skin'. At times the joints of his body seemed to be slackened and his senses stopped functioning. Transformed into Radha he now experienced the nineteen kinds of emotion for God, associated with this *bhava*. He was at last blessed with the vision of Sri Krishna and immersed in the bliss of His eternal beauty.

His Tantric sadhana comprised all the exercises formulated in the sixty-four Tantra books, most of which, as he warned, 'generally caused a devotee to sink into moral degradation.' He passed successfully through these fiery ordeals 'as if he was born to triumph over nature and freed himself from the 'eightfold fetters of hatred, shame, pedigree, culture, fear, fame, caste and egoism'. In the frightful process of the whole sadhana he stuck to his ideal of the motherhood of woman and never took a drop of wine. Transcending the levels of *Pashu bhava* and *Vira bhava* or the animal and heroic attitudes he lived in the *Divya bhava* of yearning for God-consciousness.

The physiology of his Hatha Yoga and Raja Yoga sadhanas may now be briefly described. In his practice of Hatha Yoga one day he felt an irritation in the palate followed by hemorrhage and in his own words 'the blood was dark like the juice of bean leaves' and a good Sadhu in the temple explained it as the result of the opening of the Sushumna canal and the rush of blood to the brain arrested by the bleeding near the palate. If this were not so, he would have entered into Samadhi for ever and the mission of his life would have been frustrated.

There is a place in the temple garden known as Panchavati

consecrated by his *tapas* and spiritual practices. The holy dust of Brindavan was sprinkled over it and there the saint spent days and nights in deep meditation entirely unconscious of the surroundings. As he described it, his hair was matted. Birds would perch on his head and peck the grains of rice left there during the time of worship. Often snakes would crawl over his motionless body and neither did he nor the snake know it. In the course of his intense sadhana he felt the upward march of the *Kundalini Sakthi* with a tingling sensation from the feet to the head. He narrates five kinds of motion recognized by Scripture known respectively as the ant-like motion, the frog-like motion, the serpentine motion, the birdlike motion and lastly, the monkey-like motion, in which the Yogi feels the *Kundalini* rising to the brain. Explaining the same process in terms of Vedanta he refers to seven planes of consciousness in which the soul progressively realizes cosmic consciousness. The first three levels ending with the navel are confined to normal human consciousness. The fourth opposite the heart arouses Divine effulgence ; in the fifth centre near the throat the mind functions only in God. "While I was in this state" he says, "I would feel violently struck on the head if anybody raised worldly topics before me. I would feel suffocated in his presence almost to the point of death." When consciousness ascends to the sixth centre near the junction of the eyebrows, the yogi gets the vision of the Paramatman and never comes down to the third level. There is a thin veil between this plane and the seventh known as the Sahasrara and when it is broken by means of continued Samadhi for 21 days the Jiva is completely and eternally merged in the Paramatman. Though his Yogic realisation enabled him to exercise the eight Siddhis mentioned by scripture, he treated them with repugnance and realised their utter worthlessness for devotion.

As a result of these Sadhanas his body is said to have acquired a golden complexion like that of the gold amulet which he would wear on his arm. He himself said that people would stare at the loveliness of his form. His chest and face remained flushed and the whole body seemed to emit a lustre. He then prayed to the Mother to take back this outward beauty.

The biographers next refer to his practice of Gnana Yoga and Advaita. The domain of personality has to be transcended and replaced by the personal state known

as Nirvikalpa Samadhi in which the Cosmos melts away and the One without a second shines for ever in boundless light. The saint was already the very embodiment of the four requisites of Adwaita consciousness known as *Sadhana Chatusthaya*. All these were like the very breath of his nostrils. They were food and drink to him. He was initiated into the order of Sannyasa and into the glory of Samadhi by Tota Puri, his Adwaita Guru. The saint sat for three days in meditation motionless like a corpse though his face was serene and radiant. "For six months at a stretch," he relates, "I remained in that state not at all conscious of day and night. Flies would enter my mouth and nostrils just as they do in a dead body, but I did not feel them. The hair got matted with accretions of dust. There was no chance for the body to survive but for the kind ministrations of a monk who wanted to keep the body at any cost for the immense good of the world. He would try to drag my mind down even by beating me with a stick. Then I was laid up with a terrible attack of dysentery for six months and the mind gradually came down to the consciousness of the body.

After his recovery from his chronic illness he got a desire to know Islam and used to repeat the name of Allah, wear his cloth in the fashion of the Mahomedans and recite the Namaz regularly, banishing all Hindu ideas from the mind. Then at another time there was an onrush of Christian ideas and he offered to Jesus the eager outpouring of his longing heart. All Hindu ideas were swept away before this tidal wave and it is said that after three days of intense practice he had a vision of Jesus.

At the end of these sadhanas he was blessed with a number of intuitive perceptions and visions which will form the subject of another issue.

A DEVOTEE

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## THE LATEST RELIGION

SWAMI ISWARANANDA

**E**VERY novelty has an irresistible charm of its own. A new world of ideas and visions, suddenly thrust upon man, dazzles and staggers his understanding. Ever dissatisfied with existing surroundings, ever yearning for something new to quench the thirst of curiosity, ever seeking something fresh which will hold out hopes of abiding happiness, man is only too eager and ready to clutch at any fleeting shadow that crosses his path. Whatever is new, whatever is startling or surprising, is to his mind of immensely greater value than anything which is old. Excitement works up his imagination which raises a mole-hill into a mountain, which in turn proves too heavy for his nerves and crushes him down. Then comes disappointment and with it disillusionment. Then alone is judgment correctly exercised and things are valued at their true worth.

Europe was passing through such sad experiences for the last few centuries and just now she is after 'the latest sensation' which if left unchecked is bound to take her off her feet. Europe has no doubt won the palm in the race after the knowledge of things physical, of things in the world of sense-experience and has laid the rest of the world under a 'deep debt of gratitude.' Therefore we do not and cannot deprecate the desire and eagerness of her people in the exploration of new realms of the unknown which has added so much to the store-house of human knowledge. But it is now-a-days being increasingly recognised that the West has grievously failed to properly evaluate new inventions and discoveries that have become a matter of almost daily occurrence. In his whole-hearted absorption in the world of external verities, the Westerner forgot to ask himself one simple question, viz., how far these can contribute to the abiding happiness of man? He failed to see the limitations which they possessed by their very nature when estimated in terms of the permanent happiness of man, and failed also to give only that place which they deserved in his life. All sense of proportion was lost, and exaggeration heightened by imagination took the place of calm, sane judgment.

The scientists were the first to blunder along this line. Their discoveries of steam-power and electricity, and inventions of the telegraph, the telephone, the æro-plane, the wireless and so forth took themselves by surprise as much as the man in the street and in the imagination of the Western man arose the dazzling vision of a golden era of wonderful progress and new civilization, before which all the old achievements of man would pale into insignificance. Prophets heralded forth a new era of peace and progress and happiness, a millennium of enjoyment and bliss, without any human miseries, pains or sorrows. The credulous man in the street was not more responsible than the scientist himself for raising such unfounded hopes in the breast of the Westerner. Unconsciously as well as consciously, the scientist blundered by going outside his province and in forwarding propositions about things of which he had no knowledge. Whatever he did not know he began to deny by solemnly affirming, "I have not seen it, therefore it must be untrue". Exulting in the achievements of his new discoveries and inventions he began to boldly deny the existence of God, Soul and the life moral and spiritual. Nature with all her myriad wonders and alluring pleasures was enthroned in the place of God, and Christ-life gave way to sense-life. An age of greed and selfishness supported by the right of might and cheating and falsehood followed, and Satan and his brood danced their terrible dance of death over Europe for half a dozen years. Bleeding, exhausted, and painfully disappointed, she opens her eyes to find that she had been deluded and deceived. She was slowly getting aware of the fact that she did miscalculate and that she did commit a great blunder. Thanks to the scientists, they themselves have now come forward to disabuse the Western mind of the absurdly stupendous hopes and claims held on behalf of science and its mission as the giver of abiding peace, happiness, and blessedness to the sorrowing humanity.

Hardly had Europe discovered her blunder and begun to disillusion herself and come to her sense when a handful of well-meaning but nevertheless perverted, unbalanced enthusiasts has too soon thrust upon her a new world of sensational wonder which has begun to dazzle her vision and which if allowed to rob her of the power of calm judgment, will, in another twenty-five years, turn Europe into a huge lunatic asylum. The disastrous consequences of the late war had taught her thinkers the necessity of re-evaluating her great achievements in the sphere of scientific knowledge in relation to man's abid-

ing happiness. Further, the intense misery brought on by the war has shifted the centre of interest and enquiry from nature to man himself. But here too, in this new centre of interest, Europe has hardly been given sufficient time to imbibe the lessons of her past blunder. Blunder she must, it would seem, and in the same manner, though the field is slightly shifted. If formerly it was in the apotheosising of dead matter, now it is in apotheosising dead man. Is that the proud West, the scientific West which only a decade ago looked down upon the ancestor-worshipping, ghost-worshipping, animistic man as a barbarous, uncivilised being is now paying the penalty for her pride and contempt, by herself being forced as it were by a power beyond her control, to run after the ghosts of dead men, nay to worship them as small divinities, to make a religion of *ghostology*?

Far be it from us to deprecate scientific research, or the fruits thereof. Let us explore the highest heavens and the lowest hells, the minutest atom and the mightiest globe, let us probe into every nook and corner of the universe and lighten up the darkest hiding place of ignorance. Let us have as many branches of specialized systematic knowledge of every type of phenomena in the universe. Mankind will be the better and the richer for that. Moreover, every man has a right to play his own hobby. If the astronomer finds pleasure in studying the stars and their movements, and if the geologist in the study of earth, let the *ghostologist* derive as much pleasure as he can in knowing about ghosts and their life. But often a man makes a great mistake in not knowing the limitations that are inherent in every branch of knowledge and in claiming that his hobby can ride other hobbies. It will be as much absurd and extravagant as on the part of the botanist to claim that the study of the nervous system of plants will enable a man to make a flight to Mars by mounting on the floating pollen of a flower, as for the astronomer to claim that he will cure his stomach-ache by measuring the distance between the sun and the moon.

It was this ridiculous desire of giving too much meaning and importance to one's own achievements that drove the scientist to go beyond his limits and to invest the science of Nature with the dignity of Religion, with the function of liberating man from bondage and ignorance and removing all his miseries. Not a whit less is the absurdity and ridiculousness of the claims that are being made on behalf of this new sensation of 'ghostology' by a man of eminence like Sir A. Conan

Doyle. A fairly large number of unquestionable facts, attested by expert and honest men, have been gathered by psychic research which has proved fairly well the survival of the personality of man after the death of the physical body. It may be possible under special conditions to attract the ghosts into this solid world of man's sense-experience and to commune with them and to learn the conditions of life in the ghost-world. We may even grant that souls, stricken with grief on account of separation through death from their beloved relations and friends, may find momentary consolation and gratify their curiosity in communicating with them and in receiving some sign of their existence in the other world,—though such occasional consolation is bound to enhance and prolong afterwards the poignancy of the pain of separation, rather than give lasting consolation. Granted all these, there remains the question how this communication with ghosts can ever take the place of Religion. The function of Religion has been to remove all pains and miseries of man, to lead him to eternal happiness, peace and bliss, to lead him to liberation from all bondages, to help him to go beyond all fear, to help him to know his immortal nature even in this world of change, of life and death; or in other words *to help him in manifesting and realizing the divinity that is already in him.* And he who would attain eternal peace and happiness, purity and bliss, immortality, liberation and fearlessness must know and become one with that Being Who is Infinite Knowledge, Infinite Bliss, Who is Peace Supreme, Who is Unchanging and therefore free from birth and death, Who is Fearless, Pure, and Free, and Who is "One without a second"—call Him God, Yehovah, Allah or Brahman. How then can any one dare to assert, unless it be due to the loss of the power of sane judgment under the thrills of new experiences and excitements which shatter the nerves and weaken the brains, that ghosts of dead human beings, themselves hardly less miserable than living man himself, can remove the miseries of humanity, that beings bound by all earthly ties, desires and attachments can make us free, that beings who know not peace themselves can give us unchanging peace and bliss, that they who live in fear can take us beyond all fear, that beings that undergo change every moment and are subject to the chain of birth and death can give us existence eternal and immortal, that beings that are as such sinful and impure as ourselves can lift us out of sin and impurity, that beings that live in darkness and ignorance can give us that supreme enlightenment by

which man is transformed into the Divine? Can ghosts make us more pure, more moral? Will they make us more truthful, more loving, more self-sacrificing? Can they take away our jealousy, anger, pride and hatred? Can they take away our earthly desires and morbid attachments to relatives and friends which go by the name of love? Shall the consolation of communication with the uncanny, creeping, mystical shadows of the dead be in any way superior to the pleasure of daily intercourse between living friends and relatives on this plane of ours? Least of all, can it be compared with Divine communion which the sages, seers, and saints all over the world perpetually enjoyed in their hearts? How many ghost-mediums have brought out from their state of trance the solution of the problem of life and death? How many of them have realized the supreme purpose of life, attaining which no more desire remains to be fulfilled? How many ghost-seers have been transformed into better, purer, holier beings? How many of them can show like a Buddha, Krishna, or Christ a way for the salvation of the soul? How many of them are overflowing with that all-embracing love which has been the unfailing characteristic of every seer of God in every country and clime?

Is it not a fact that men possessed by ghosts all over the world are nothing but ghosts of their former selves, with their nerves shattered, and brains weakened, ever living in fear, starting at the most innocent sound of a falling leaf or at the sight of a moving shadow, ever ready to give way to the least disturbance in their surroundings? With their pale face and troubled look they have been the objects of pity. Where is that cheerful, calm, serene face expressive of the rich contentment that is inside, that divine peace, that halo of purity and holiness, that *Brahma Tejas* oozing out through every pore of the body of the man of God-realization? Where are those sparkling eyes through which the light of the Divine within, the Atma-chaitanya shines forth in transcendental effulgence; where that calm self-poise of perfect self-control; that surety and security of having plumbed the depths of all that exists; that strength and courage which remain unshaken even if the whole universe is powdered to atoms; that fearlessness which calmly defies disease, poverty, infamy and death itself; that graceful smile which gladdens the heart of the onlookers and cheers them with the hope of a higher destiny; that kindly loving look of assurance which speaks, "Aye, Children of Immortal Bliss, I have found that One knowing whom you

shall cross this ocean of birth and death, fear no more"—where are these signs that are found in the man of God-realization, that come to the man of Religion, to approach whom is to become pure and holy, to see whom is to get rid of fear, to open our heart to whom is to fill our heart with love divine, that all-embracing love for all things, to receive whose grace is to find the way of liberation, to be blessed by whom is to be blessed with supreme enlightenment, by meditating on whom the sinful become saintly, the weak become strong, the timid become fearless, the ignorant become enlightened, the bound become free, man becomes God,—aye, where are these signs of the man of Religion, of the man of God-realization to be found in the seers and charmers of ghosts? What a gulf of difference between those who have seen ghosts and those who have seen God! Yea, "Thou shalt know them by their fruits".

Says Evelyn Underhill, a great authority on Western Mysticism: "When anybody speaking of Mysticism proposes an object less than God—increased knowledge, of health, of happiness, occultism, intercourse with spirits, supernatural experience in general—then we may begin to suspect that we are off the track." (*The Essentials of Mysticism*).

'Ghostology' is not so entirely new to mankind as Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and his colleagues would fondly like to imagine. Belief in ghosts and various other species of beings in the other world goes as far back as the history of mankind has been able to peep into. From the earliest glimpses of its history up to the present day we find that there was never a time when India gave up the belief in the survival of the personality of man after the gross physical body has ceased to function. The idea of reincarnation has been taught by every sect of Indian religion for ages and ages; every newborn child has imbibed it with his mother's milk; life and death are to him but coming and going (*samsara*), a changing of clothes for his soul; few grandmothers are living in India who cannot give some personal experience of shadowy apparitions and their mischief; no village exists here which has not got its own small hut-like chapels where the beings of the other world are propitiated with sacrifice of goats and fowls; no Hindu lives who does not at least once a year please his ancestors with offerings of food and drink; there are whole castes who are ghost-charmers by profession: yet India never made the mistake of confounding ghostology with Religion. The Puranas of the Hindus are full of stories of various species of beings

of the other world, *Nagas, Yakshas, Gandharvas, Kinnaras, Asuras, Devas, etc.*, but the Hindu never confounded them with divinities. He believed in supernatural beings, with supernatural powers, but he never mistook them for God, nor did he care a fig for them when it came to the question of *mukti* or liberation. On the other hand, he believed that all these beings one day or other must take birth in this human body if they would attain *mukti* and eternal beatitude. The heavens and the throne of Indra the man of Religion spurned. The question of reincarnation does not affect the main propositions of Religion. Religion is for the man who lives, it is to be realized while living in the body. God was realized by the saints, seers and sages while they lived in the world; their teachers were God and living men of God-realization. The immortality which they realized was not the survival of the finer body of man after the dissolution of the physical body, it was the immortality of the Self, of the Atman, that has neither birth, growth, decay, nor death, that is unchanging and is the same in man and ghost and in all living beings, that is the Self of God and the Universe, the Ever Free, the Ever Pure, the Ever Blissful, the Ever Awake, the Self-effluent.

'Ghostology' to play the role of Religion! Ghosts to wrest the throne of God! Possession by spirits spirituality! Communication with the misty, shadowy, flitting apparitions to take the place of the divine mysticism of a Christ, of a St. Francis of Assisi, of a Jacob Boehme, of a John Ruysbroeck! The survival of the psyche to replace the immortality of the birthless, deathless Self! "Religion" indeed! Nay, "the very essence of living religion" (extracted and distilled?) that "is going to sweep the earth and revolutionise human views upon every topic save only on fundamental morality which is a fixed thing, beside which all modern inventions and discoveries will sink into insignificance" ! (Sir A. Conan Doyle—*Kalpaka* of February, 1926.)

The law of Karma, as much as the law of gravity, is not to be defied without reaping the consequences. He who worships God shall become God; he who would not worship God shall worship the devil; he who would not worship the Spirit (the Self) shall worship matter; he who does not seek enlightenment shall be overshadowed; he who would not worship Christ shall worship the ghost and he who worships the ghost verily becomes the ghost.

SWAMI ISWARANANDA

## EDITORIAL.

### RELIGION AS THE FULFILMENT OF ETHICS

**T**HE people of the West have yet to fully realise that life is not merely on the material plane but also on the spiritual. The West, no doubt, is rich in the expression of life in the physical realm; but the East in the expression of life in the inner. Each is, therefore, dominated by different ideals and guided by different principles of thought and action. As an outcome of this we find that behind the philosophy, thought, science, humanities and arts of the East, there is the golden background of the Spirit; but behind the thought and life of the West this is missing. In countries like India, culture, thought and civilisation have grown like the fair flowers from the spiritual soil; in countries like Europe the spiritual element is but one of the many flowers making the whole garland.

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This general distinction between Eastern and Western thought and life is seen also in the conception, scope, and function of Ethics. The word is derived from the Greek root *ethos* meaning custom. Ethics must have had its origin in pre-historic days when different tribes, families, and individuals found it necessary to live side by side in amity and peace fostering a spirit of inclusive tolerance and conciliatory co-operation for the good of all. Each had to recognise the rights of others and keep itself within certain commonly accepted bounds for ensuring harmony and good-will. The conception of Ethics in those days was necessarily crude and destitute of the refinement of cultured thought, but with the dawn and growth of civilisation it became subtler and deeper until the distinction between right and wrong has become a difficult problem for thinking minds to-day. Ethics has now become more complex and intricate, more connected with metaphysics and the deeper issues of life and its destiny, and more interwoven with the Ultimate Reality and the means and methods of realising It, than ever before. Says James Martineau with his characteristic ardour and depth of

feeling: "I have always been a teacher; I have not ceased to be a learner; in the one capacity I must tell the little I know; in the other I must strive after some glimpse of the immeasurable light beyond." It was this consciousness of "the immeasurable light beyond," an inward urge divine which propels man to go beyond the senses and the phenomena, that expressed itself in these other words of the same sincere soul: "... in us as finite and dependent beings there is a sense of Obligation and overshadowing Authority, assuring us that the higher claim is not simply in us, but over us. This sense of Duty is not the pure essence of the moral idea itself but the consciousness of its administration to us from the Supreme Source." This recognition of the need for co-relating morality with religion and Divine Law is not so strong and so universal in the West as in the East.

There is a Western theory of ethics called an Independent System which regards certain rules as absolutely obligatory, without explicit reference to their ultimate consequences. Almost all the other theories of Western ethics have been derived from two things which men of the West regard as intrinsically reasonable ends of conduct, viz. Perfection or Excellence, Happiness or Pleasure. A man may make fame the end of all his life and actions and model his life accordingly, but in the words of Sidgwick "no one has deliberately maintained that fame is an object which men ought to seek except as a means to something else, either as the best stimulant to the attainment of Excellence, or because its pursuit affords on the whole, the keenest happiness." Either of these two ultimate ends, Perfection and Pleasure may be sought for oneself alone or for all. We thus get five main possible Western views of ethics: Independent or Intuitive, Egoistic and Universalistic Perfectionism, and Egoistic and Universalistic Hedonism. Practically, however, as the moralists who take perfection or excellence as the rational end of conduct, consider virtue as by far the most important element in the excellence aimed at, and as virtue, unless we accept the Hedonistic view, consists in the observance of certain rules of Duty intuitively known, the method of Egoistic and Universalistic Perfection coincides with the Independent or Intuitive me-

thod of ethics. On the other hand, if the Hedonistic view of virtue be taken by a Perfectionist, his theory of conduct will hardly differ from those pure Hedonists who explicitly set happiness or pleasure as their ultimate end. Thus all the five methods can be reduced to three. Intuitionism, the theory of absolute rules of Duty intuitively known; Egoistic Hedonism, the theory which takes as the proper end of conduct the happiness of oneself; Universalistic Hedonism which takes as its end the happiness of all. It is this last and third method that is properly called "Utilitarianism" using the word in its historical meaning, to denote the moral philosophy of Bentham and James Mill.

\* \* \* \* \*

All morality and custom is relative, as different persons placed in different positions and situations of life have to discharge different duties. The standards of conduct prevailing in different countries, societies and grades and sections of communities vary enormously. Considering the custom of marriage, we find that in one country cousins can marry; in another such marriage is considered reproachable. In one caste, uncles can marry nieces; but in another, they cannot. So also monogamy and polygamy are recognised standards of marital relationship in different countries and under different religions, as also widow remarriage and enforced widowhood. Similarly in matters of food, dress, etc., one man or sub-caste or caste or community or race differs from another. Meat-eating is prohibited for the Brahman though he can take flesh offered in sacrifices to the gods; but the Kshatriya kings and warriors can take meat plentifully and without scruples. Likewise, in every country, society, and family, social, political, economical, national and international standards, ideals and rules of conduct vary amongst common men, and great thinkers, philosophers, reformers, moralists and didactic teachers hold almost incredibly different views. These latter belong to one or other of the theories we have mentioned above.

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The Hindu or Vedantic school bases its views on conduct on the existence of a special faculty endowed to man or the revealed will of God as determining the dis-

inction between right and wrong. This does not mean that it does not give any place to reason but makes reason subserve intuition as reason is limited and finite. In the East alone arose Rishis or mantra-drash-tas who postulated ethical rules and precepts to be followed with a teleological motive for one's emancipation. Such an ethical code had the sanction of the superconscious, the stamp of the divine for its authority, as the various laws or rules of conduct were discovered by the Rishis when they attained *Samprajnata Samadhi* or "*Cognitive trance*." These laws and rules of conduct so discovered constitute what is known as Dharma to the Hindu.

धारणाद्धर्ममित्याहुर्धर्मो धारयति प्रजाः ।

"That which supports, that which holds together the peoples, that is Dharma."

So says the Mahabharata (Karna Parva LXIX, 59). Dharma is not merely a set of beliefs having no necessary connection with the daily life of humanity but it forms the basis of a healthy and beneficent, noble and spiritual life. Therefore to know those principles and act upon them is to be a true Aryan (or follower of Vaidika Dharma), and to tread the sure goal of happiness, individual as well as general. The etymological meaning of "religion" is also the same, "that which binds together" (*re* back, *ligare* to bind). One of the most remarkable things in the Sanatana Dharma or Eternal Religion is the way in which it has laid down a complete scheme of knowledge and then crowned it with a philosophy composed of six faces, but governed by one idea and leading to one goal. No such comprehensive and orderly view of human knowledge is elsewhere to be found. It is also "like a river, which has shallows that a child may play in, and depths which the strongest diver cannot fathom."

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The law of the Unity of all selves is the foundation upon which Hindu Ethics or Dharma is built. There is but one Self or Atman, and all the separate selves are parts or reflections of the One, are the one.

यथा प्रकाशयत्येकः कृत्स्नं लोकमिमं रविः ।

क्षेत्री तथा कृत्स्नं प्रकाशयति भारत ॥

“As one sun illuminates this whole world, so does He who abides in the Kshetra, O descendant of Bharata, illumine the whole Kshetra.”

एको देवः सर्वभूतेषु गूढः सर्वव्यापी सर्वभूतांतरात्मा ॥

“One God is hidden in all beings, all-pervasive, the inmost Self of all.”

The one sun of the Self is shining resplendent and it shines into every corner. There may be millions of gardens, lakes, and oceans separated from each other by barriers but the one sun shines into them all and the light and heat in each are from it and are its parts. The walls of Prakriti may separate one Jiva (soul) from another but all souls are but rays of the self-effulgent Atman and are one. We cannot feel and realise this fact until we have become pure and ethical, following the path of Dharma. But whether we feel it or not, realise it or not, it is an eternal verity which cannot be challenged. If a man cuts away his hand or plucks out his eye, whether he knows that the injury will affect him or not, the result of such injury is sure to follow. If we do harm to our neighbours, we harm ourselves. He who has realised this truth of the oneness of life consciously does good and lives a consciously ethical life, for he knows he is the Self itself with but the mind and body veiling it like the gold leaves covering rubies and emeralds. This oneness of life is the real and only rationale of ethics. We may declare with Christ, with all the authority of moralists and burning earnestness of didactic teachers, that all men should be good and kind to each other. But why should a man or a nation be good and kind to others when happiness, prosperity, and power can be easily gained by cutting others' throats as it is done to-day? The answer is not to be found in the Utilitarian theory of ethics of James Mill and Bentham but in the irrefutable truth of the solidarity of man and the oneness of the Universe which the saints and seers have come face to face with, and which we too can realise if we will. The world's leaders of political or international thought will have to realise the same problems; for the problems of to-day are far more ethical and spiritual than political, and will defy solution unless they are attempted on a spiritual basis. The One Life behind all things animate and in-

animate is the real source of all love, base or noble, pure or impure, high or low. When Maitreyi prayed of Yagnavalkya the secret of immortality, he explained :

न वा अरे पत्युः कामाय पतिः प्रियो भवत्यात्मनस्तु कामाय पतिः प्रियो भवति ।

“Behold! not indeed for the love of the husband is the husband dear: for the love of the Self is the husband dear.”

And so with wife, sons, property friends, worlds and even the Devas themselves. All are dear because the one Self is in all.

न वा अरे सर्वस्य कामाय सर्वं प्रियं भवति ।

आत्मनस्तु कामाय सर्वं प्रियं भवति ॥

“Behold! not for the love of the all, the all is dear, but for the love of the Self verily, the all is dear.

And the Rishis built the Dharma they taught on the solid rock of this truth and as the latter was arrived at through Divine Reason which does not contradict reason but fulfills it, the system thus inculcated became authoritative for the Hindu. The very idea of Adharma (negation of Dharma) would therefore strike deep horror into the mind of the Hindu as the idea of “sinn” and “hell-fire” into the mind of the Christian.

A good and virtuous life of service to others seems to be the highest aspiration of the Western man; but in India, altruism and virtue, however high, are not considered the goal of life. The ideal for the Indian is spiritual; it is the mystic communion with the One Universal Spirit or the Personal God. The Aryan’s hankering after Truth, after a glimpse of the Infinite behind the finite, after the spirit behind matter, has led to the domination of his Ethics by ultimate conceptions. One can therefore notice several cultural conflicts in the conception of Dharma which varies with different persons placed in different stations and situations of life and occupying different places in the social fabric. Such conflicts are but the crossings and recrossings of hundreds of roads and foot-paths, straight or circumambient, each leading to the illimitable ocean of Truth. However painful a conflict

of duties may be to an individual, he is bound to face it with cheer and do his own Dharma ; for him the conception of Reality is primary ; morality in the Western sense has value only in so far as it fits him for his ultimate destiny on which metaphysics alone can throw light. Ethics has an unquestioned and unquestionable disciplinary value ; it is the best and finest preparation for higher spirituality. But after all it is only the ante-chamber leading to Truth. Moral categories are no more final than intellectual categories. A moral and ethical life is only an episode in the career of the soul. Good and evil are two inner and outer envelopes of a golden ball. The ball is Truth and even good is but an envelope, nearer as it is to Truth than evil. Says Sri Ramakrishna : " Brahman is unattached to good or evil. He is like the flame of a lamp. You may read the *Bhagavata* by the light of the lamp or it is equally open to you to forge a document with criminal intent by the same light."

Hindu Dharma or Ethics is thus characterised by depth, subtlety, complexity and many-sidedness. It is the most philosophical and metaphysical of all systems of ethics. It does not possess that bold simplicity of the Islamic system which may appeal to the masses, nor is it satisfied with the mere ethical abstractions of Buddhism. Righeousness is placed by these two systems for men to follow, but Hindu Dharma places realization of Truth first. Nor does it preach pure non-violence for all humanity like the Sermon on the Mount. Its extreme adaptability and varied nature arise from its devising various means and methods suited to various temperaments to reach the Ultimate, on the basis of the text :

यो वै भूमा तत्सुखं नाल्पे सुखमस्ति

"What is unconditioned alone can give happiness ; there is no happiness in finitude."

The cultural conflicts which one notices in the conception and application of Hindu Dharma will become manifest when we consider, for example, the problem of violence and non-violence in the light of the teachings

of Hinduism. Says Sri Krishna to Arjuna in the battle-field of Kurukshetra :

यं मास्म गमः पार्थ नैतत्त्वय्युपपद्यते ।

क्षुद्रं हृदयदौर्बल्यं त्यक्त्वोत्तिष्ठ परंतप ॥

“Yield not to unmanliness, O son of Pritha! Ill doth it become thee. Cast off this mean faint-heartedness, and arise, O Scorcher of thine enemies !”

Sri Krishna exhorts Arjuna in these words to fight, for fighting is *dharma* for the latter. Krishna knows that Arjuna will have to slay his own flesh and blood and his own teachers. Yet he cheers him up to fight. This indeed stands in striking contrast with the teachings of the Masters of Yoga who have laid down the rules of *Yama* (the practice of non-killing, truthfulness, non-stealing, continence and non-receiving of anything, even if it be a gift, that is conducive to luxury) and *Niyama* (the practice of the virtues of cleanliness, contentment, mortification, study and self-surrender to God). These form the preliminary moral training without which no Yoga can become fruitful. A Yogi must not think of injuring anyone, by thought, word, or deed, and wanton injury not only to men but also to animals should be scrupulously avoided. Nay, his mercy should go beyond and embrace the whole world. Jesus has said: “If anyone smite thee on thy right cheek, turn him thy left also.” Krishna’s exhortation to Arjuna and the teachings like those of Christs are not the same, because Arjuna is one who is to follow the *Pravritti* (circling outward of the mind) *Marga*, which stands in contrast to the *Nivritti* (circling inward) *Marga*. Most men can follow the former, but only a few are qualified for the latter. A still small voice from within tells us that non-violence is indeed the highest moral ideal ; but the whole social fabric would crumble to pieces if any and everyone of us were to put that maxim into practice. What is duty for one is not duty for another. A *Mahatma* or a great soul can practise non-violence but the non-resistance of a weak lazy idiot is nothing but the result of arrant cowardice. He alone who has relinquished *Yoga* (acquisition) and *Kshema* (prosperity) is fit to practise non-resistance. India’s children forgot this truth for several scores of

years and if Sri Krishna's clarion call to be manly and strong even in the face of death is not heeded, they cannot remove their misery and weakness.

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It has been remarked that the metaphysical basis of Hindu Ethics is mainly responsible for the Hindu's indifference to 'society and the future of the race'. Says Darmesteter : 'The Zoroastrian religion brought two things of which the old Aryan religion in the midst of which it arose had no idea or only a dim perception ; those two things were morality and hope.' By morality is here meant a vivid idea of the social welfare, and hope is the idea of the future of the society. This charge against Hindu Ethics may be true to some extent, for the Hindus, as a nation, care more for religion and the spiritual life than for pure nationalism as it is understood in the West. But be it noted here that the whole body of *Niti Sastra* which forms an integral part of the Dharma Sastra, aims at bringing about a healthy solidarity of the communal life and develop the collective consciousness. Nationalism in India is based upon and centres round the conception of Dharma and culture : in the West it is built upon the idea of the State as the foundation. In India the individual sacrifices his all for the redemption of his soul ; for, 'what can it profit a man if he gains the whole world but loses his own soul ?' ; in the West the individual sacrifices his all for the State or the *Commune*. But, however, it is worth remembering that whereas the Westerner is aggressive and cruel in the name of nationalism, and follows the motto 'Each for himself and let the devil take the hindmost,' the Hindu who is often contemptuously called 'gentle' and 'mild' devotes or attempts to devote his life for an ideal and takes his stand on the spirit and has thus been able to exercise a silent creative power which works for the unity of mankind. The Hindu is also sanguine about the future of his race, for he knows that only a society or country which stands for Eternal Life can survive the ravages of all-consuming Time. And is he not true? For, what other nations than his have survived? In countries where Cæsars ruled, 'the spider weaves its web to-day'!

## REVIEW

TEMPLES, CHURCHES AND MOSQUES, by Yakub Hasan. Price Re. 1-8-0. G. A. Natesan & Co., Madras.

This volume gives a kaleidoscopic view of the world's religious architecture. The author 'takes us through the Chaldean to Egyptian, Greek and Roman temples, through the Buddhist and Hindu monuments to the temples of the Far East in all their variety and splendour ; again to Solomon's temple and the Kaaba at Mecca ; to the coming of the Messiah and the magnificent cathedrals of mediæval Europe ; to the birth of Mahomed and the Mosque architecture of Egypt and Turkey and Spain ; to Byzantine and Saracenic styles of architecture ; and finally, to the beautiful Moghul architecture of Hindustan. The reader finds himself face to face, now with the pylons of Egypt or the Parthenon of Athens, now gazing at the dizzy domes of St. Marks or St. Peters, now passing through the corridor of the Rameswaram temple, or admiring the golden flooring of the Shewdagon Pagoda, now stupefied by the height and immensity of Kutab or lulled into a beautiful vision by the delicate craftsmanship of the 'Taj.' One would see from the descriptions of the temples, churches and mosques given in the book how India is an epitome of the world of religion, the home of several faiths. If one can view the structures that have been raised by man for the worship of God as manifestations of the reverence and devotion which every being feels for his Creator, irrespective of caste, creed or colour, one may also come to the belief that all religions are but forms of the One Eternal Religion though the methods of worship vary in a thousand ways.

## NEWS

### THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION VAIDEESWARA VIDYALAYA, JAFFNA.

Having been invited by some of the friends in Jaffna, Srimat Swami Sharvanandaji went to Ceylon in the beginning of February and stayed in Jaffna for nearly three weeks. The immediate object of his going was to re-settle the affairs of the school there called the Ramakrishna Mission Vaideeswara Vidyalyaya which was brought under the control of the Mission in 1917, but was all along being managed by a local Committee. It was found necessary to re-organise the school work and tag it on to the other educational activities carried on in other parts of the island by Srimat Swami Vipulananda on behalf of the Mission. Therefore Swami Vipulananda has now become the Manager of the institution.

During his stay Swami Sharvanandaji was able to establish a nucleus of the Mission in a Math kindly offered by Mr. Chittambalam, the most popular Sub-Collector of Customs in Jaffna. The Swami also delivered several public lectures at different places of the town. At the request of Lady Ramanathan, the Principal of the Ramanathan College, the Swami addressed the lady students on "The Women Saints of India". The lecture was very much appreciated by all.

# THE VEDANTA KESARI

"Let the lion of Vedanta roar."

"Let me tell you, strength, strength is what we want  
And the first step in getting strength is to uphold  
The Upanishads and believe that 'I am the Atman.'"

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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## PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

BY SRIMAT SWAMI SIVANANDA

AT THE FIRST CONVENTION OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MATH AND MISSION, 1926

### CHILDREN OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA.

Please allow me to express my sincere felicitations at your congregating together in this Convention of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission held for the first time in the annals of the Ramakrishna Order. This convention, I am confident, will afford you a unique opportunity of comparing notes with one another regarding the various works carried on by different centres which you have met here to represent and also of hearing from the few surviving disciples of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna about the ideas and ideals of religion as expressed in and through the life of our Master, which will undoubtedly go a great way towards increasing the necessary solidarity of this organisation.

Had Swamiji been alive to-day, how warmly would he have greeted you all and showered his blessings on this gathering for bringing its deliberations to a successful end. The vision of another great soul who was regarded by the Master as next to Swami Vivekananda in his capacity for realising religious ideals comes irresistibly before our mind to-day. Indeed, if Swamiji was loved and cherished by the Master as the instrument by which to proclaim to the world his great mission in the realm of religion, Swami Brahmananda was no less regarded by him as the person to fill an important and

very responsible place in the scheme of his religious organisation. In fact, under the paternal care of the Raja Maharaj\*, the first President of the Ramakrishna Mission, the organisation that had but existed as a seed in the monastery of Baranagore assumed its present form of a mighty plant. Although we sadly miss them and some of our brother disciples such as Swami Premananda, Swami Ramakrishnananda and others, who had no mean share in contributing to the growth of this organisation, I invoke the benedictions of them all as well as that of our Master on this auspicious occasion.

I do not wish to give you here any detailed scheme for the furtherance of the objects of this convention. I shall be satisfied with telling you a few words in general out of my personal experience and I shall feel happy if I be of any service to you in bringing the deliberations to a successful issue.

Three decades ago, when the present activities of the Ramakrishna Order with its various ramifications all over the country and abroad were in the womb of futurity, when people knew Swami Vivekananda as but a preacher of Hinduism who upheld the cause of our Sanatana Dharma in the Parliament of Religions at Chicago, the great Swami with the keen vision of a Prophet clearly foresaw the part that the teachings of his Master would play in shaping the destiny of humanity at large which had been lying then in the melting-pot of a great transition. The admonition of his Master to forego the selfish enjoyment of Samadhi and dedicate his life to the welfare of the many, seeing God alone immanent in the Universe, haunted him day and night ever since that memorable day when Sri Ramakrishna, in a mood of inward absorption, handed over to his illustrious disciple the precious fruits of his own realisations reaped in the course of the crowded period of his Sadhana, and made him the happy conduit for the flow of the elixir of spirituality that the world needed at a great psychological period of its history.

After the passing away of the Master, Swamiji formulated a unique scheme of thought to shape the future of his countrymen for the revivification of the world culture—a scheme which was the outcome of some of his strange personal experiences. The chief formative influences that went to determine his vision may be classified under the following heads : his Master's great prophecies regarding him ; his own training and realisations; his knowledge of Western philosophy.

history and Sanskrit scriptures ; the constant study of the divine life of his Guru before him in which he found the key to life and the verification of the Sastras; his travels all over his motherland in the course of which he availed himself of the opportunities of comparing her as she then was with what she had been, and of studying the life and thought of the people, their needs and possibilities and the diversities of their customs and faiths. Mixing with princes and peasants, with saints and scholars, he grasped in its comprehensiveness that vast whole of which his Master's life and personality was but an intense epitome. These then—the Sastras, the Guru and the Motherland—are the three notes that mingle themselves to form the symphony of Swamiji's life and works. These were the treasures which he wanted to offer to the world at large.

The above-mentioned experiences furnished him with the clue to the understanding of the prevalent disruptive world-forces which necessitated the advent of a Prophet. The first thing that arrested his thought was the prevailing bigotry among the different religions of the world and a very parochial conception regarding the ideal of religion itself. The different creeds which were thought of by the ancient seers as but different paths for the realisation of one and the same Truth, maintained a bellicose attitude towards one another. Like frogs in the well, the followers of a particular sect refused to see anything beyond the tip of their nose. And secondly, religion working on a narrow basis subjected itself to self-condemnation by ostracising the various schemes of life from its scope. Religion was conceived as having nothing to do with the actualities of our everyday life and therefore was left aside as an exclusive ideal to be pursued by the recluse in the forest or by men outside the pale of society. The highest maxim of Vedanta was considered as utterly incompatible with work. A permanent cleavage was made between work and worship, renunciation and service—an unfortunate factor which contributed most to our national degeneration. At this juncture, the world sorely needed a man who would formulate a religion that would be scientific and a science that would be religious.

Swami Vivekananda found in his Master such a man. Sri Ramakrishna stood at that point of equilibrium in which the great conflicts of life neutralise one another. In him was found a wonderful *rapprochement* of the various apparently

jarring creeds. First of all, by actual realisation, he demonstrated the practical utility of the three main systems of Indian philosophic thought—monism, qualified monism and dualism—to reach the ideal which is beyond any particular philosophical doctrine. Again, reaching the same goal by following some of the accepted paths, *viz.*, Sanatana Dharma, Islam and Christianity, he demonstrated the efficacy of these different religions intended to suit different temperaments. In him was revived once more the long-forgotten ideal of the Vedas, एकं सद्भिर्वा बहुधा वदन्ति, "The Truth is one, but sages call it by different names." And lastly in his life was noticed a wonderfully harmonious reconciliation between such apparently incompatible ingredients as Jnana, Bhakti, Karma and Yoga. A man who held the highest Samadhi in the palm of his hand, also melted into tears at the mere mention of the name of God. He who had realised Truth by following the intricacies of the Yoga system was also found undergoing the pain of slow crucifixion in the midst of tremendous activities for distributing the fruits of his own realisations among fit recipients. This all-sided man appealed irresistibly to the mind of his disciple, who clearly saw that the future world, reborn and rejuvenated, must bear the stamp of his *guru's* genius.

The Buddhistic organisation of ancient India as well as the discipline and organised effort of the modern progressive West, where also he had travelled a great deal, might have suggested to the mind of Swamiji the idea of an institution that would, under proper discipline, make a practical application of the teachings of his Master. Swami Vivekananda, a practical idealist that he was, soon after his return from the West, formulated the idea—at once original and bold—of a Math which would be the fittest mirror wherein future generations would find a true reflex of the life and thought of Sri Ramakrishna.

As the very basis of the Math we find the following words of the Swamiji. "This Math is established," said he, "for the attainment of one's own liberation as well as to get equipped for the amelioration of the world in all possible ways by following the path laid down by Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna Deva. Another Math working on this line will be established for women as well." These pregnant words of the Swami Vivekananda form the corner-stone, as it were, of the Math established by him. A proper understanding of these words, which mean much more than what appears on the surface, will

supply the pivot of the entire organisation controlled and managed by the members of the Ramakrishna Order.

At the very outset we find that he has linked up into a single purpose two apparently diverse ideals, viz., one's own liberation and service for the welfare of the world. Through this Math he has sought to weld together the ideals of renunciation and service, work and worship, which, as people generally believe, cannot possibly combine without proving detrimental to each other. According to his ideal, the attainment of personal liberation need not necessarily contradict the dedication of life to the service of humanity, nor should the latter in its highest aspect be thought of as apart from the activities of the man who is eager to pierce through the mist that has covered the effulgent Truth lying within his own self. If the highest illumination aims at nothing short of effacing all distinctions between the individual soul and the Universal Soul, and if its ideal be to establish a total identity of one's own self with Brahman existing everywhere, then it naturally follows that the highest spiritual experience of the aspirant cannot but lead him to a state of exalted self-dedication to the welfare of all. He makes the last divine sacrifice by embracing the universe after transcending its limitations which are the outcome of ignorance. Swamiji wanted to make the members of his Math the most willing instruments in the hand of God for the fruition of His work, the fulfilment of which task must confer upon them the felicity of the highest spiritual illumination. Sri Ramakrishna used to tell us again and again that to enjoy a sweet mango all by oneself is a much lower ideal than to share it with others.

Again, looking from an ordinary standpoint we find Swamiji, the great Acharya that he was, giving us the ideal of an organisation wherefrom its members will get the greatest facilities of an integral realisation, rich and full in its conception and attainment. The aspirant will have to combine in his Sadhana elements of the four accepted paths—Jnana, Karma, Bhakti and Yoga, laying greater stress on a particular process according to his individual temperament. Not a single one of these items must be left out, otherwise the result will be a little less than complete. Thus we shall presently see in the ways prescribed for the members of the Math a wonderful synthesis of meditation, worship, study and work.

That the Math must not limit itself within a narrow precinct but consecrate itself to a wider scope of activities, is

clearly evident from the following words of Swamiji. "Such Maths we must establish," says he, "all over the world. Some countries stand in need of spirituality only, whereas others are in need of a few worldly amenities. We must lead nations and individuals to the realm of spirituality through paths suited to them by fulfilling the respective wants that such nations and individuals may be most suffering from." "The first and foremost necessity in India," Swamiji goes on, "is the propagation of education and religious ideas among the lower classes. It is impossible for hungry men to become spiritual unless food is provided for them. Therefore, above all, our paramount duty is to show them new ways of food supply."

These clear words unmistakably show what Swamiji conceived to be one of the principal items in the spiritual exercises of the inmates of his Math. So far as Indian work was concerned, the devotees of Sri Ramakrishna acknowledging Swamiji as the expounder of his life and teachings accept a programme of activities which have hitherto been considered as belonging to the secular domain and therefore left outside the scheme of life of those who wanted to attain the highest goal of existence here and now. It is not work, the Gita and other Sastras say, that demeans or elevates a man, but it is his attitude towards work that is the real determining factor. It stands to reason also that if with love and devotion a Sadhaka can discover Divinity in mere images, he can, certainly with much more ease, realise God through worship of man—surely a higher creation than the inanimate objects—if worship be performed there with the same amount of sincerity, devotion and love. Without doubt, man is the highest symbol of God and his worship is the highest form of worship on earth.

This ideal of Sadhana conceived by Swamiji further developed into a practical suggestion which he made regarding the plan of work of the Math. "This, then, is our aim," he said, "that this Math will have to be slowly developed into a finished university, where the culture of philosophy and religion must proceed along with a fully equipped Technical Institute. This is our primary duty. Other branches of study will be added later on to its curriculum." A very bold conception indeed! Nowhere in it is to be found the slightest trace of a compromise with the stereotyped ancient ideal of leaving out works from the conception of an ideal religion. This is the

special significance of the message of Swamiji to his countrymen. In order to save the Math from the inevitable calamity that had befallen similar institutions in olden times, Swamiji warned its guardians to see that it must not lapse into a mere Thakurbadi or a chapel where superficial ceremonies take the place of the spirit of the thing—**बाबाजीदेर ठाकुरबाडी** to quote his own words. "Such a chapel," said he, "may prove beneficial to a few or satisfy the passing curiosity of a handful, but this Math will prove of inestimable value to the whole world." This, then, is the basic conception of the Math founded by Swami Vivekananda.

A Math based on such a lofty ideal reflecting the life of Sri Ramakrishna, its guardian angel, cannot be anything but catholicity itself. Humanity has never before seen another life like that of Sri Ramakrishna synthesising the highest ideals of knowledge, devotion, work and Yoga. Those only who mould their lives after the perfect ideal of Sri Ramakrishna's character can be truly said as representing the ideas of the Math. Therefore Swamiji enjoined that the special aim of this Math would be the formation of character by combining the above-mentioned four paths, and that the spiritual exercises that would bring about such a synthesis would alone be accepted as the Sadhana of this Math. "Therefore," he said emphatically, "everyone must bear in mind that a man who shows the slightest deficiency in any one of the above-mentioned ways has not been properly cast in the mould of Sri Ramakrishna's life. He who consecrates himself to the service of others does a nobler work than he who tries to work out his own liberation." This is really the special feature of this Math. Before the advent of Sri Ramakrishna it was thought perfectly natural, nay inevitable, that one system of religious thought alone could flourish in a Math. But realising the three main systems of Indian philosophical thought as but different readings of the Absolute, Sri Ramakrishna made it possible to establish a Math on the bedrock of transcendental experience wherefrom equal utility of all these systems of philosophy can be boldly proclaimed as leading to the realisation of the highest Impersonal Truth. To save his Math from the contingency of some unavoidable evil results, Swamiji laid equal emphasis on the culture of the head, heart and hands. He knew that mere work uninspired by religion and unaccompanied by meditation, discrimination and other spiritual exercises, degenerates into a kind of pure social activity.

Such mechanical work, not attuned to a higher conception of life, piles bondage upon bondage. Hands can work for the desired end when vision is clarified and the heart finds facilities for its full expression. Again, simple discrimination or study of the scriptures ends in mere intellectual gymnastics, dry and insipid, if it does not express its conclusions in terms of the actualities of life. Similarly, devotion degenerates into meaningless and often dangerous sentimentalism if it dissociates itself from discrimination and work. To know Truth, to feel its presence in the innermost recesses of one's heart and to realise its expression all around—these are but three aspects of the same highest divine realisation. His ideal monk was one who would be now absorbed in meditation and the next moment be prepared to explain the difficult intricacies of the Sastras. The same monk again would with equal zeal cultivate the field and sell the produce of it in the market carrying it on his own head.

The following is the clear instruction of the Swamiji regarding the programme of work of the Math:—

“Want of culture brings about the degeneration of a religious sect. Therefore culture of knowledge should be practised in the Math without intermission. Luxury crushes a Math when its members forget the ideals of renunciation and austerity. Therefore these ideas must be always kept bright in the organisation. Dissemination of ideas adds to the vigour and vitality of an organisation. Therefore this Math must never stop its preaching activities.

“In a narrow society religion is generally seen to possess a certain depth and intensity like that of a small rivulet. Similarly, it is noticed that the depth and intensity diminish in proportion as the ideas of liberality creep into it. But the strangest thing is that transcending all such historical precedents, ideas broader than the sky itself and deeper than the ocean found a wonderful reconciliation in the life of Sri Ramakrishna. It is thus proved to the hilt that the greatest catholicity and the greatest extensity can exist side by side with the utmost intensity in an individual, and a society can also be established on such a basis, because society is but an aggregate of individuals.” Of course a man of wide and catholic outlook of Sri Ramakrishna's stamp cannot be met with every now and then. But such a want can be compensated and the integrity and cohesion of the Math kept intact, if its different members holding Sri Ramakrishna as their ideal and following

different paths of Sadhana according to their temperaments are accepted as integral parts of the institution and equal facilities afforded to all for individual growth and expression. Sri Ramakrishna may not exist any more in this physical body, but so long as his catholicity be kept untarnished, the Math will certainly feel his presence. Swamiji also declared, "This Math represents the physical body of Sri Ramakrishna. He is always present in this institution. The injunction of the whole Math is the injunction of Sri Ramakrishna. One who worships it, worships him as well. And one who disregards it, disregards our Lord."

An institution with such a catholic outlook may contain, to all appearances, elements of disintegration—a fact to which Swamiji was very keenly alive. Again, all outward dissensions are preceded and accentuated by mental disruptions. Therefore Swamiji laid down unity of purpose as the greatest force for maintaining the integrity of the institution. All members of the Math must repeatedly study and think on this conception of the Swamiji regarding the Math and try to translate it into practice in their individual life. "Mutual love, obedience to the authorities, forbearance and an unalloyed purity can alone maintain unity and an *esprit de corps* among the members of the Math"—and save them from the calamity of disintegration. Fame is the last infirmity of noble minds and it seduces even the noblest soul from his path of duty. Hankering for fame causes jealousy which in the end spells ruin to the organisation. "Sri Ramakrishna never cared for name and fame. We are his followers and servants. So we must always set aside all allurements of name and fame. Our ideal in life is to carry out his commands, leading pure lives ourselves and teaching others to do so." A great responsibility rests on our shoulders. We must know that Sri Ramakrishna sits on the crest of the wave that has already gone forth to raise humanity from its present state of depression—and it is through the members of the Math that people will judge of Sri Ramakrishna. Our work will proclaim his glory. We are his representatives wherever we may go or live. People will see in the members of this Math a reflection of Sri Ramakrishna. Consciousness of such responsibility cannot but bring about a unity of purpose among the different members of the Math.

A spirit of obedience on the part of the workers and that of willing service on the part of the leaders must pervade the

entire atmosphere of the Math. The success of an organisation depends a great deal upon the capacity of its leader. The faculty of organisation is entirely absent in our nature. This has become our peculiar national trait. But the secret of success lies in the absence of jealousy. The leader must be always ready to concede to the opinion of his brother workers and try always to conciliate. "Don't try to be a ruler," Swamiji said addressing the leaders. "He is the best ruler who can serve well. Never attempt to guide others or rule others or, as the Americans say, boss others. Be the servant of all. Nobody will come to help you, if you assume the role of a great leader; kill self first if you want to succeed. The great secret of success is never to figure out big plans at first, but begin slowly, feel the ground and proceed up and up." Again, "You must go and seize the crocodile first if you are told to do so and then argue." This should be the attitude of every worker. With great agony Swamiji said, "If there is any crying sin in India at this time it is our slavery. Every one wants to command and no one wants to obey. This is owing to the absence of that wonderful Brahmacharya system of yore. First learn to obey. Always first learn to be a servant and then you will be a fit master. The worker must carry out the orders of his superior, leaving aside even the consideration of his life. Fear is at the root of all misery. It is the greatest sin. Therefore we must overcome it altogether. The first and foremost cause that separates a brother from his brother is to speak ill of one another behind the back. The members of this Math must studiously avoid it. If a member must say anything against his brother, it must be confided to him alone. Not one among the followers of Sri Ramakrishna is bad. Had he been so he could not find entrance into the Order. Every member of the Math must deeply ponder over it before judging others." These are some of the very practical suggestions which Swamiji has given for bringing about the spirit of co-operation and co-ordination among the different members and different centres of the Belur Math. His warning to the recalcitrant member still rings clear in our ears. "To make a great future India," Swamiji said, "the whole secret lies in organisation, accumulation of power, co-ordination of wills,—organisation alone, is the primary means for all progress and the only way for the conservation of energy. The curse of the entire organisation must fall on the head of him who would try to bring about its

disruption and disintegration by word, thought and action, Nothing but ruin awaits him in this world or in that to come. "

The present division of the activities of the Ramakrishna Order into those of the Ramakrishna Mission and the Ramakrishna Math, which may give rise to a little confusion, is a purely technical one. It is generally believed that the Math is, as it were, a place for meditation and study alone, whereas philanthropic works have been relegated to the scope of the Mission proper. Though in practice it has become so in some cases, it is necessary to clear up any confusion that may exist in this respect. From what I have said before you will clearly understand that the Math conceived by Swamiji includes everything—work as well as worship, social service as well as meditation and study. As we have seen before, he wanted to incorporate with the Belur Math a full-fledged university, including in its curriculum the study of religion and philosophy as well as that of technology. In his time, no necessity was felt for making a formal separation of the Order into the Math and the Mission. To give effect to his ideals, he established an Association on the 1st May, 1897, to unite the monastic and lay disciples of Sri Ramakrishna Deva in a common organised effort for the service of humanity. As the Association, which had been named the Ramakrishna Mission, thrived and its activities widened, it was given, to remove some purely technical difficulties, a legal status by registering it in 1909 under Act XXI of 1860 of the Governor General of India. Thenceforth on legal grounds alone a formal distinction has been made between the Math and the Mission. Really speaking, for the convenience of the public, a part of the Math itself has been given, as it were, the appellation of the Ramakrishna Mission. All the members of the Ramakrishna Order, whatever may be their sphere of work for the time being, belong in essence to the Ramakrishna Math conceived by the Swamiji. Any attempt to make a cleavage between the existing Math and Mission works is distinctly against the ideal of Swamiji and therefore stands self-condemned. Any attempt to find a distinction between the ideals of the Math and the Mission is unholy and dangerous. Be good yourself and help others to be so—was the injunction of Swamiji to every member of the Math. And he wanted to give effect to this by a combination of the four accepted paths of Sadhana, allowing, as we have said before, fuller expression to a particular path according to the temperament of the as-

pirant. Hence there is no room for a clash of ideals. To try to find a distinction between the ideals of the Math and the Mission is like trying to distinguish between two facets of the same coin. Therefore those who are engaged in philanthropic works should be considered as important members of the Order as those who have devoted themselves to meditation alone in a cave of the Himalayas, provided all of them acknowledge their allegiance to the ideals of Swamiji. Those who retire from the arena of activity for a time and lead exclusively a life of meditation and study with a view to equip themselves more fully for the work, are regarded as invaluable assets for the growth and vitality of the organisation. The Math is a picturesque bouquet containing the flowers of Jnana, Bhakti, Yoga and Karma whose variegated colours and sweet aroma contribute to its richness and beauty.

Well, friends, I have told you what I had got to say. From my little experience I tell you, children of Sri Ramakrishna, that our organisation lasts as long as the spirit of God pervades its atmosphere. Love, catholicity, purity and selflessness are the corner-stones of our organisation. No man-made laws can save it from ruin when selfishness eats into its vitals. If you all try to become perfect—keeping intact your allegiance to this Math which gives you every kind of facility for reaching that perfection, you will add a leaf to the life of the organisation. Swamiji shed his blood for the Math. His spirit is still hovering over us. This Math is the visible body of Sri Ramakrishna. All those that have gone before us are still with us in spirit to help us in all possible ways. We must unfurl all sails so that we may take advantage of the divine wind that is ever blowing to take us to the destined goal.

Religion is the great mission of India. This is the only gift that we can bestow on the world. From time immemorial religious ideas flowing from this land have been contributing their quota to shape the civilisations of the world. We are still alive in spite of the many vicissitudes that have befallen this unfortunate race during the last ten centuries, only because religion forms the backbone of our life. With us God is the central pillar around which move all other schemes of life individual or collective. True greatness is estimated here in the scales of spirituality. In pursuance of the great law enunciated in the *Gita*, the Lord has again incarnated Himself in this age as Sri Ramakrishna to revive the lost ideals of religion. Incarnations and Prophets came before him in numbers

to show us light in the midst of darkness, to elevate us from national depression. But the darkness of former ages that necessitated the advent of Prophets, compared with the darkness that has overwhelmed us at present, may be said to be light itself. The former national depressions compared with our present one look like mere mud-puddles. Therefore to extricate us and to disentangle the world from the tentacles of dark material forces, God has, through His infinite grace, incarnated Himself again in the fullest degree. "Through thousands of years' chiselling and modelling, the lives of the great prophets of yore come down to us; and yet, in my opinion, not one stands so high in brilliance as that life which I saw with my own eyes, under whose shadow I have lived, at whose feet I have learnt everything. Before this great wave of spirituality there have been whirlpools of lesser manifestations all over society. It came, at first unknown, unperceived and unthought of, assuming proportions, swallowing, as it were, and assimilating all the other little whirlpools, becoming immense, till it assumed the shape of a tidal wave falling upon society with a power that none can resist." That great personality, the greatest that the world has ever seen, is behind you. Our forefathers performed great deeds, you must do greater deeds still. Each one of us will have to believe that everyone else in the world has done his work, and the only work remaining to be done to make the world perfect, has to be done by himself. This is the responsibility we have to take upon ourselves.

In old Buddhistic monasteries a sincere effort was made to do good to the world through organised efforts. And they succeeded a great deal in their object. Since the record of history, Buddhistic monks, through their organisations, have perhaps put the greatest lever for humanity's good. If the unknown history of some of the principal existing religions and systems of philosophy be ever written, the world will know how much these intrepid monks contributed to their growth and development. So long as those monasteries kept intact the pristine ideals of purity and renunciation, they were irresistible wherever they went. But when that spirit waned the religion of Buddha showed signs of decadence. This is a great historical lesson we are to learn. In the subsequent history of India we find occasionally an individual rising to the highest pinnacle of perfection, but he did not care much for people

around him. Undoubtedly he realised a great ideal. But the ideal itself, for want of a suitable medium of expression, died of inanition in the course of a generation or two. This is another great lesson. Again, we find during the last few centuries the growth and development of Maths and Ashrams in the country in a very large number. Though they might have benefited a comparatively small number of people who gave up the world, by providing them with facilities for their individual spiritual growth, they could not be of much help to society at large, because they omitted from their scheme of spiritual exercises a spirit of service for humanity. This is the third lesson of history. Swamiji took all these facts into consideration before setting forth the ideal of his Math. Dedication of our life to the attainment of our own liberation as well as to the amelioration of the world at large—आमनो मोक्षार्थं जगद्धिताय च —is what he has chosen for us—the ideal of all ideals. I have my fullest confidence in you all who have been earnestly endeavouring to realise this lofty ideal in life. You do not hesitate to brush aside any personal considerations, however strong, for the realisation of this ideal—and I clearly find Sri Ramakrishna, our Light and Guide, working from behind you and through you. His benign hands are at the back of all of your activities. It is his grace alone that has enabled your works to be crowned with success within such a short period of time. So long as you have faith in him, so long as you consider yourselves as humble instruments in his hands, no power on earth, however great, can shake you from your position by so much as a jot or tittle. Putting your faith in our Lord everyone of you can say, "Let me stand where I am and I shall move the world." I exhort you with all the earnestness at my command not to be disturbed or discouraged by momentary failures. Failures are but stepping-stones to success. Viewing success and failure alike, work on with unwavering faith in him and victory will be yours at the end. I only pray that your surrender may be complete. Be like the arrow that darts from the bow. Be like the hammer that falls on the anvil. Be like the sword that pierces its object. The arrow does not murmur if it misses the target. The hammer does not fret if it falls on a wrong place. And the sword does not lament if it is broken in the hands of its wielder. Yet there is a joy in being made, used and broken ; and an equal joy in being finally set aside.

I invoke the blessings of Sri Ramakrishna on you all so that he may give you strength and courage to realise Truth in this very life.

Let the atmosphere of this convention vibrate with a spirit of love and benediction. Let us, in conclusion, say with the great Indian sages and echo the voice of the Vedas :

मधु वाता ऋतायाते ॥ मधु क्षरन्ति सिन्धवः ॥ माध्वीर्नः सन्त्वोषधीः ॥  
मधु नक्तसुतोषसो ॥ मधुमत्पार्थिवं रजः ॥ मधु द्यौरस्तु नः पिता ॥ मधुमान्नो  
वनस्पतिर्मधुमां अस्तु सूर्यः ॥ माध्वीर्गावो भवन्तु नः ॥ ओं मधु ॥ ओं मधु ॥  
ओं मधु ॥

“Sweet blow the winds and the rivers scatter sweetness !  
May the herbs and trees be full of honeyed sweetness ! May  
night and morning yield us joy ! May the dust of the earth  
be sweet unto us ! May father Heaven give us happiness !  
May the sun shower Bliss on us ! May the cows yield us all-  
sweetness ! Om Joy ! Sweetness ! Bliss !”

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## RECEPTION ADDRESS

BY SRIMAT SWAMI SARADANANDA

CHAIRMAN OF THE RECEPTION COMMITTEE OF  
THE RAMAKRISHNA MATH AND MISSION CONVENTION, 1926

**I**T seems to be the invariable rule that every newly started movement should pass through the two stages of opposition and indifference before its principles are accepted by society and humanity at large. And as human nature is the same everywhere, we find the display of this rule alike in the East and the West. Start new ideas of reform on social, moral, political or religious lines, wherever you like, and you will find the people around you opposing them. And the more radical the ideas of your reform movement, the more vehement will be the opposition. People will say the principles of the movement will ruin the very foundation of everything that is good and useful. But if the movement has real life in it and is based on essential truths governing human nature and its various functions and activities, it will survive, grow and drive its roots gradually into men's hearts, in spite of that opposition. This opposition from outside helps the movement to concentrate its energies and bring into expression and life the fundamental truths on which it stands; so we cannot call it bad after all.

The opposition wears away after a period and gives place to indifference, when those who opposed the movement at first begin to say that after all there is nothing so very new in it. For, have we not in such and such passages of our old records and scriptures, the mention of the principles which it preaches? That is proof sufficient that our forefathers knew and carried them into practice long ago. So we need not think much of it. The movement thus spreads unhindered far and wide in this second stage and finds a secure footing in due time by the recognition of its existence and utility by society.

So at the end of this second stage we find it accepted by a consensus of public opinion, as it were, and the ranks of its votaries, henceforth, swell speedily with its proving itself worthy of this social acceptance and recognition. But this third stage of public acceptance is not to be regarded as the millennium in the progressive career of it. For, security of

position brings a relaxation of spirits and energy, and a sudden growth of extensivity quickly lessens the intensity and unity of purpose that were found among the promoters of the movement. Hence in place of outside opposition we find the budding forth in it of an internal opposition due to the varied opinions of its members, and later, in place of the former spirit of sacrifice for truth, a struggle to maintain the secure social position by compromising truth with half-truths and a clinging more to the appearance than to the spirit of things, which characterise the propensity of an easy-going existence. And if the leaders of the movement are not awake and watchful enough, or neglect to grapple the situation by finding remedies to check and stop the springing up of those evils, you can well imagine the result. First and foremost, the unifying bond of love slackens with the incoming of selfish motives, and its members losing sight of the wide outlook of the welfare and improvement of the movement as a whole, form themselves into detached groups with a view to improve and make permanent separate parts of it as unrelated to the whole. The principle of disintegration entering thus into its body through this narrow channel, goes on dividing the work to pieces. And in course of time disobedience to superiors, vanity, indolence and a whole host of other faults crop up within the work to ruin it for ever.

The Ramakrishna movement had passed through the two stages of opposition and indifference, a few years before the time when its great leader the Swami Vivekananda left us after giving it a working shape and organisation in the name of the Ramakrishna Mission. Since then the Mission has been working steadily along that line for the last quarter of a century and has brought itself to that point, at present, where it has found recognition and acceptance in the hearts of the people of India and of several countries abroad. From a simple organisation working mostly in Bengal it has in this short period spread itself quickly to all the Presidencies and provinces of India, nay to Burma, Ceylon and the Federated Malay States and to the far West, America and England, and incidentally to some other parts of Europe as well. You, friends, and your brother co-workers had the good fortune to render yourselves willing instruments in the hand of the Master to bring about this glorious end. You started centres of philanthropic works at Murshidabad, Benares, Kankhal and

Brindaban, depending solely on the Lord and have proved before the public what your prophetic leader said in some of his speeches that not money but men—men fired with zeal for a noble cause and having character and fixity of purpose—are wanted to render such works permanent and successful. You started preaching and educational institutions at Madras, Bangalore and many other places in Southern India and comparatively lately at Nagpur, Bombay, Kuala Lumpur and Rangoon, which have drawn the attention and respectful co-operation of the local public. And by your frequent relief works to help the poor sufferers in famine, flood, fire and plague-stricken areas all over India, you have helped to arouse and establish the present confidence in the name of the Rama-krishna Mission in the hearts of the people at large. You have stuck to your places with wonderful patience and perseverance for twenty years and more, nay in some cases for a whole life-time since relieving hands could not be found.

Yea, the Master and His chosen leader have done wonderful work to help poor India and other more fortunate countries through you ! But still greater works remain yet to be accomplished, and the Master and the Swami will do it all in time, even through you, if you keep close to their purity and singleness of purpose, their sacrifice and self-surrender for all that is good, true and noble, and follow their footsteps with that meek and humble spirit with which you have followed them. For, if we come forward to do their work in any other spirit and think too much of ourselves, because we have been chosen and allowed to do their work thus far, we shall find to our great regret that we have been hopelessly rejected and that others have been chosen instead to take our places.

The present convention affords you the rare privilege of meeting many of your senior co-workers and elders to profit by their experiences, of discussing and settling future plans of work with them for the welfare of the Mission as a whole, and for warding off the dangers and evils that threaten to overtake all institutions at this critical stage of their acceptance by the public. Join it with all sincerity and openness with a view to make a thorough and sifting inquiry of the whole work to find out if we have swerved from our glorious Ideal in our struggle to keep up to the demands of this unique extension. Hold fast to the Ideal, for the Ideal has in it the stored up energy, the Kundalini, behind every movement—and judge yourselves and others by its effulgent light. Thus alone,

can you make the convention a success for the permanency and glorification of the work. Remember it is not a new and untried path through which we are inviting you to travel. The Buddhists tried the method, of old, several times with the enormous spread of their congregation, and warded off the ruin of their noble work for a long time. And the followers of Jesus the Christ and of the prophet Mahomed had recourse to the same method from time to time in their past history. The plan of work, therefore, is not new, but the success of its application depends entirely upon the sincerity and unity of purpose of those who would apply it to their special case. So in the words of our Leader, I call on every one of you to arise, awake, and stop not till the goal has been reached,—till by the grace of the Master you have accomplished the noble task that you have imposed upon yourselves. Friends, brethren, children, co-labourers in the vineyard of Sri Ramakrishna, I welcome you with all my heart in the name of our hallowed Master, our illustrious leader, the Swami Vivekananda, and our late President, the best beloved of the Master, the Swami Brahmananda.

## THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION AND THE IDEAL OF SERVICE\*

SWAMI YATISWARANANDA

"The national ideals of India are renunciation and service. Intensify her in these channels and the rest will take care of itself."

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

**S**PEAKING on the Ramakrishna Maths and Mission, Lord Ronaldshay says in his *Heart of Aryavarta*: "Associated with the Monastic Order (of Sri Ramakrishna) which consists of Sannyasins and Brahmacharins is a Mission, these twin organisations standing for renunciation and service respectively, declared by the late Swami Vivekananda to be the two national ideals of India. The Mission undertakes service of all kinds, social, charitable and educational. The monasteries are dedicated to the perpetuation through their spiritual culture of the great Ideal and Revelation which Sri

\*A paper read at the Ramakrishna Math and Mission Convention, 1926.

Ramakrishna Paramahansa embodied in his life." A word of explanation is necessary here. The twin ideals of renunciation and service are inseparable like the twin institutions of Math and Mission. In the monasteries of the Order of Sri Ramakrishna, greater stress is laid on renunciation and spiritual culture as ordinarily understood, and in the various branches of the Ramakrishna Mission greater emphasis is placed on what is popularly known as service. True service, as we shall presently see, is a form of spiritual culture.

The object of Swami Vivekananda's founding the twin institutions of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission was to carry on the Mission of his great Master, and this by bringing into existence a band of workers who would strive their utmost for आत्मनो मोक्षाय जगद्धिताय च —"for both the emancipation of the Self and the well-being of the world." And with this end in view, the Swami tried to express the ancient monastic ideals not only through the old methods of quiet spiritual practice and silent preaching, but also through what the modern world calls service—but service spiritualised. All persons, irrespective of caste or creed, race or nationality, are to be looked upon as veritable manifestations of the Divine, and served according to their needs—physical, intellectual or spiritual.

Renunciation in its highest form means self-effacement or the killing of the ego with all our base desires and passions. It implies the sacrifice of the lower self with a view to manifest the higher. As Swami Vivekananda puts it : " We must die, that is certain ; let us die then for a good cause. Let all our actions tend towards the sacrifice of self." The body that is nourished by food should be held as a sacrifice to the welfare of humanity. The mind that is developed through study must be laid down for the service of all groping in mental darkness. The soul that is evolved through mental discipline and religious practice should be utilised for the spiritual ministration of the world-weary souls hankering for the higher life. It is thus that our mortal death can be turned into our spiritual birthday. And this is the ideal of renunciation realising itself in service that Swami Vivekananda placed before the members of the Ramakrishna Mission and the world at large.

The Ramakrishna Mission is pre-eminently a religious body, its service forming a part of its Sadhana or spiritual practice. It stands for the universal ideals of religion. Its

numerous preaching centres in India and America are trying to spread through the life and thought of their members a true knowledge of Religion in its all-embracing aspect and also to promote fellowship among the followers of the different religions of the world, which are in fact, as Sri Ramakrishna realised, so many forms of the One Eternal and Universal Religion. Its educational institutions aim to impart to the students, and that in a spirit of service, the best cultures of the East and the West, and to instil into their mind moral and spiritual ideals which are essential for the building up of true character. Its permanent charitable centres in which the monastic members themselves mostly perform the duties of the doctor and the nurse and also render other forms of service, are attempting to alleviate the miseries and sufferings of the poor and the destitute in various towns and villages. Its temporary relief centres, often conducted with great personal risk, render service to the afflicted during the prevalence of plague, influenza, flood, famine and other widespread calamities.

What was the mainspring of Swami Vivekananda's inspiration ?

The source of Swamiji's inspiration was the life and teachings of his great Master. The service to the Daridra Narayanas was practically inaugurated by Sri Ramakrishna himself during the sixties of the last century. While going on a pilgrimage to Northern India with Babu Mathuranath Biswas—son-in-law of Rani Rasmani who founded the Temple of Dakshineswar—Sri Ramakrishna was distressed to see the miserable condition of the people of a village near Deoghar. And moved with great sympathy and compassion he said to Mathur Babu, " You are the steward of the Divine Mother. Feed these poor people one day nicely and give each one of them a piece of cloth. " But Mathur Babu hesitated. The pilgrimage he had undertaken was a very expensive one. And the people whom Sri Ramakrishna wanted to be fed and clothed were very large in number. Funds might fall short during the journey. But Sri Ramakrishna was inexorable. He was weeping to see the abject poverty and misery of the men, women and children before him and exclaimed—" I am not going to Benares. I prefer to remain with these helpless and destitute people. " Saying this, he took his seat among the poor—the objects of his compassion. Mathur Babu had no other alternative. He ordered bales of cloth from Calcutta

He fed the people sumptuously and distributed the cloths among them. Sri Ramakrishna's joy knew no bounds and he readily consented to proceed on his pilgrimage.

What is the motive of this service? To quote Sri Ramakrishna's own words, "If one gives away anything in charity with the spirit of non-attachment, he does it for his own good, and not for simply doing good to others. He thereby serves God who resides in all beings, and service unto God means helping one's own self. If a person serves God manifest in all beings—not only in man, but also in other creatures—without craving for name and fame, or for going to heaven after death, and expects no return from those whom he serves—such work is really work without motive, and it benefits him alone." This is the spirit of service as laid down by Sri Ramakrishna. Work, thus performed in the right spirit of Karma Yoga, becomes worship, and is one of the most efficient means of self-purification and God-realisation.

This ideal was impressed by the Master on the mind of Swami Vivekananda during the latter's days of discipleship. Srimat Swami Saradanandaji narrates an incident in his life of the Master,—*Sri Ramakrishna Lila-Prasanga* :—One day when Sri Ramakrishna was seated in his room at Dakshineswar, surrounded by Narendranath and other disciples, the topics under discussion drifted to the ideal of showing mercy to all creatures. "Show mercy to all creatures!"—the Master repeated these words and passed into a deep trance. On coming back to the state of semi-consciousness, he took upon the thread of the discussion and explained the true import of the ideal of charity :—"Kindness to all creatures! Fic upon thee, man! An insignificant being thyself, how canst thou show mercy to God's creatures? Who art thou to show mercy? No, no, it can't be mercy. Rather serve all *Jivas*—all beings—as Shiva—God Himself." Narendranath of all others understood the deep significance of the words of the Master and found in them a wonderful illumination. In these words he got the clue to his Practical Vedanta—by which the highest ideals of the Vedanta—the property of the recluse of the forest and the cave—could be brought to the city and the market place, and applied to the life of all—monks as well as householders. To attain to the highest knowledge—the knowledge of Unity—a person need no longer cut himself away from society and root out from his

heart the noble impulses of love and service. By looking upon all as embodiments of God and serving them with reverence and love, the spiritual aspirant is sure to be able to purify his mind of the sense of superiority and arrogance that often accompanies our ordinary acts of charity, and thereby to realise ultimately the God in all beings as also in himself. Narendranath grasped the spirit of service as interpreted by Sri Ramakrishna, and expressed the hope of proclaiming it some day, if the Lord so willed. The Lord did will as the Swami hoped. And Swami Vivekananda became the messenger of the sublime gospel of service which he carried to the doors of all—learned and ignorant, rich and poor, Brahmin and Pariah alike.

The path of service is a sure means to God-realisation. And the God whom Sri Ramakrishna and, following him, his greatest disciple Swami Vivekananda worshipped and realised in their own lives was no colourless abstraction. It is the sole, living reality which is absolute and relative, transcendent and immanent at the same time. And the universal love which swayed these twin souls was born of their vision of the One in the Many. "I see Him," declared Sri Ramakrishna, "in all and as all. Men and other creatures—all appear as veritable figures skin-bound, but with the Lord within! The one Substance has taken the forms of the cosmos with all living creatures. I realise that all come of the one substance." Thus God may be worshipped not only in the temple of brick and mortar, but more than that, in the temple of flesh and blood—in the tabernacle of the human body. If God is in every being, does He not exist in the sick and the diseased, in the ignorant and the illiterate, in the weary soul yearning for the waters of Life? It is this vision of the One dwelling in all that made Swami Vivekananda declare with all the passion of his soul:—"May I be born again and again and suffer thousands of miseries, so that I may worship the only God that exists, the only God I believe in, the sum-total of all souls. And above all, my God the wicked, my God the miserable, my God, the poor of all races, of all species, is the special object of my worship." He says further: "Blessed are we that we are given the privilege of working for Him, not helping Him. Cut out this word help from your mind. You worship. Stand in this reverent attitude to the whole universe."

There exists a good deal of misunderstanding as regards the religion of service proclaimed by the Swami by his life and

precept. The Swami learnt this creative aspect of religion at the feet of his Master who was a living embodiment of Vedanta in practice. But still some doubt whether or not this ideal of service is Hindu in origin. Some think it to be inspired by Christianity, forgetting the great fact that it existed in India long before Christ was even dreamt of. Others think in other ways. To give an illustration. Some orthodox people once paid a visit to a Sri Ramakrishna Home of Service. Seeing the Sannyasins as well as the Brahmacharins with the holy thread serving the patients, from the so-called high caste to the low caste, without any distinction—against what these visitors thought to be the principles of Varnashrama Dharma—they came to the conclusion that the Ramakrishna Mission was a Buddhist organisation ! It is a pride to the members of the Mission to be looked upon as followers of the Lord Buddha—who laid great stress on the practical application of the grand truths of the Vedic religion, and preached with a new power and meaning the ideals of India,—renunciation and service. But the source of this inspiration can be traced to the Upanishads—the perennial fountain-heads of Hindu spiritual life. Swami Vivekananda, as we have seen, no doubt, got the direct impulse from his great *Guru*. But the Master's life again was a part of the eternal spiritual current that has been flowing in an unbroken line since the dawn of Hindu religious consciousness that broke at a hoary antiquity into which history does not dare to peep.

The spirit of charity and compassion has been one of the dominating ideas of Hinduism. The Upanishadic sage declared—

तयो धर्मस्कन्धा यज्ञोऽध्ययनं दानमिति । .

“ There are three branches of Dharma. The group of sacrifice, study and *charity* forms the first. ”

एतत् त्रयं शिक्षेत् दमं दानं दयामिति ।

“ Let the triad be taught—control of the senses, *charity* and compassion. ”

Further—

अद्रया देयम् । अन्नद्रयाऽदेयम् । प्रिया देयम् । हिया देयम् । भिया देयम् । संविदा देयम् ।

“ Gifts should be given (to noble Brahmanas) with reverence ; it should not be given without reverence ; it

should be given in plenty, with modesty, with fear and with compassion."

Again—

मातृदेवो भव । पितृदेवो भव । आचार्यदेवो भव । अतिथिदेवो भव ।

"Let thy mother be to thee a god ; let thy father be to thee a god ; let thy teacher be to thee a god ; let thy guest be to thee a god."

Charity and compassion are extolled everywhere although some limitations are put on them at times.

Sri Krishna also declares in the Bhagavad Gita—

यज्ञो दानं तपश्चैव पावनानि मनीषिणाम् ।

"Sacrifice, *gift* and austerity are purifying even to the wise."

Charity sometimes has its restricted sphere. But the Lord also speaks of the saints whose love carries away everyone in its sweep.

लभन्ते ब्रह्मनिर्वाणमृषयः क्षीणकल्मषाः ।

छिन्नद्वैधा यतात्मानः सर्वभूतहिते रताः ॥

"With imperfection exhausted, doubts dispelled, senses controlled, *engaged in the good of all beings*, the Rishis obtain absolute freedom."

Sri Krishna further enumerates the following attributes of one born for a divine state—

अहिंसा सत्यमक्रोधस्त्यागः शान्तिरपैशुनम् ।

दया भूतेष्वलोलुप्त्वं मार्दवं ह्रीरचापलम् ॥

"*Non-injury*, truth, absence of anger, renunciation, tranquility, absence of calumny, *compassion to beings*, non-covetousness, gentleness, modesty, and absence of fickleness." Non-injury and compassion to beings are two of the most noble characteristics of the holy life.

Love for all beings is the most dominating note in the lives of Hindu sages and saints. The sage Dadhichi, who laid down his life for the well-being of the gods, says in the Bhagavatam—

योऽध्रुवेणात्मना नाथा न धर्मं न यशः पुमार ।

ईहते भूतदयया स शोच्यः स्थावरैरपि ॥

"Even inanimate objects feel sorry for him who does not earn Dharma and fame with the help of his perishable human body by showing compassion to all beings."

To the saint no sacrifice is too high if it brings about the well-being of others. The great devotee Prahlada prayed even for the welfare of those who tormented him. When asked by the Lord for boons he replied—

न त्वहं कामये राज्यं न स्वर्गं न पुनर्भवं ।

कामये दुःखतप्तानां प्राणिनामर्तिनश्नम् ॥

“ Lord, I do not want any kingdom, nor worldly happiness, nor even escape from re-birth. What I want is the cessation of the affliction of all beings tormented by the miseries of life. ”

The well-being of the noble souls consists in the well-being of others, for they belong to the great family of humanity which is God embodied. According to the Mahabharata—

“ He alone is a knower of Religion who is the friend of all beings ; he who is intent on the welfare of all with act, thought and speech. ”

The Vishnupuranam again repeats the same idea, but declares at the same time that this love is born of the highest knowledge.

“ Knowing the Supreme manifest in all beings, the wise extend love to all creatures without any exception. ”

As a matter of fact all the Puranas declare with one voice—

परोपकारः पुण्याय पापाय परपीडनम् ।

“ Doing good to others is religion ; doing harm to others is sin. ”

This compassion or rather love for all creatures is a special mark of spiritual greatness. As Sri Sankaracharya points out—

शान्तो महान्तो निवसन्ति सन्तो वसन्तल्लोकहितं चरन्तः ।

तीर्णाः स्वयं भूमिभवार्षवं जनानहेतुनान्यानापि तारयन्तः ॥

“ The great souls, calm and magnanimous, who do good to others as does the spring, and who having themselves crossed the dreadful ocean of birth and death, help others also to cross the same without any motive whatsoever. ”

Selfish life means spiritual death. Hence it is that the true devotee prays to the Lord not only for the stilling of his mind and senses, but also for the expansion of his self through love for all beings—

अविनयमपनय विष्णो दमय मनः शमय विषयमृगतृष्णाम् ।

भूतदयां विस्तारय तारय संसारसागरतः ॥

“ Oh Vishnu, remove my egoism, calm my mind, control my attachment for the mirage of the sense-objects, increase my love for all beings, and save me from the ocean of existence. ”

The old ideal of love and compassion has been handed down to us without any break through our various religious ceremonies and festivals in which acts of charity form an important part. It is especially manifest in our Sraddha and Tarpana ceremonies in which libations are to be offered not only for the peace of the souls of one's own relatives but also for all beings. And one has to repeat—

आब्रह्मस्तम्बपर्यन्त देवर्षिपितृमानवाः ।

तृप्यन्तु पितरः सर्वे मातृनातामहादयः ॥

“ Let the devas, sages, manes and men also all my relatives both on the father's and mother's sides—all beings from Brahma down to the blade of grass be appeased. ”

This ideal again is at the back of our charitable institutions. Our innumerable Chatrams and Dharmashalas sprinkled all over the country still give shelter and distribute food freely, sometimes even indiscriminately, to religious men, travellers and beggars. Charity, though mostly individual and rarely organised, undoubtedly plays a great part in our collective life even to-day.

In inaugurating the Ramakrishna Mission, Swami Vivekananda placed before the country the ideal of making charity, discriminative and organised. But his speciality lay in the fact that following his Master, he went to the logical conclusion of the ideals of charity and compassion. He refused to make in service any invidious distinctions of caste or religion. Besides, he saw that from the standpoint of humanity, the poor and the ignorant stood in urgent need of charity and service more than others. His heart overflowed with love for the indigent and the down-trodden. And he passionately appealed to the young men of his country—“ I bequeath to you young men, this sympathy, this struggle for the poor, the ignorant, the oppressed. Vow then to devote your whole lives to these millions going down and down every day. . . . . You have read : मातृदेवो भव । पितृदेवो भव । ‘ Let the mother be as god to you ; let the father be as god to you. ’ I say :

दरिद्रदेवो भव । मूर्खदेवो भव । The poor, the illiterate, the ignorant the afflicted—let these be your God. Know that service to these alone is the highest religion. " The ideal of service is not only not antagonistic, but is in full accord with the highest course of conduct of every true religious Hindu. It implies a wider application of the पञ्चमहायज्ञ or the five forms of scriptures enjoined on all high caste Hindus—ब्रह्मयज्ञ or the study of the scriptures, दैवयज्ञ or the offering of oblations to the gods, पितृयज्ञ or giving libations to the forefathers, नृयज्ञ or offering food to human beings, and, भूतयज्ञ or offering food to even lower beings. " Service—physical, intellectual and spiritual—to all human beings, high or low, is only a practical application of नृयज्ञ which literally means 'sacrifice to human beings. " All these are the spiritualised forms of दया or compassion manifesting themselves in दान or acts of charity—an ideal which our modern age so urgently needs. The great Manu has declared—

तपः परं कृते युगे त्रेतायां ज्ञानमुच्यते ।

द्वापरे यज्ञमेवाहुः दानमेकं कलौ युगे ॥

" Penance is the special pursuit of Satya Yuga, knowledge of the Treta Yuga, sacrifice of the Dwapara Yuga and charity of the Kali Yuga. "

This dark, iron age of ours can be transformed into the golden age, if following in the footsteps of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, we can perform all our acts of charity—whether it is physical relief or imparting of secular education or spiritual ministration—in the spirit of service and worship to the Lord whom the Upanishadic sage addressed in the following inspired words—

त्वं स्त्री त्वं पुमानसि त्वं कुमार उत वा कुमारी ।

त्वं जीर्णो दण्डेन बन्धसि त्वं जातो भवसि विश्वतोमुखः ॥

" Thou art man, Thou art woman, Thou art youth, Thou art maiden, Thou as an old man totterest along on Thy staff. Thou art born everywhere. "

May we all strive to realise this grand ideal of service to the God in man and bring blessings to ourselves and to the whole world !

## EDITORIAL NOTES

### THE RAMAKRISHNA MATH AND MISSION CONVENTION

THE first week of this month witnessed a unique event in the annals of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission in the holding of the Convention of the entire body of the monastic and lay members, for the first time. It was in the year 1886 that the Great Master, with whose name the Math and the Mission are christened, attained Maha-samadhi leaving behind a small band of fourteen young souls fired with the enthusiasm of his uncommon renunciation and purity, and saturated with his breath of spirituality and God-intoxication. Immediately after the physical disappearance of their Master, they grouped themselves together under the leadership of Swami Vivekananda of hallowed memory, and started a small monastery in an almost dilapidated house in the little village of Baranagore near Calcutta. That was the beginning of the organisation now known as the Ramakrishna Math and Mission. Since then forty years have rolled down the stream of time, and the seed that was laid in the Baranagore Math has developed into a mighty tree having ninety-two stout branches not only spreading all over this *Punyabhumi* of Aryavarta, but also extending to distant shores across the seas; and the fourteen disciples have created an army of four hundred and fifty to rally round the standard of Sri Ramakrishna, having dedicated their all to serve him and him only in life. The life Sri Ramakrishna breathed into his Sannyasin disciples, had a wonderful dynamic force, the full unfoldment of which it will take some centuries, perhaps, to make. The early chapter of this brotherhood is filled with the intense life of *Sadhana*, *Tapas* and self-abnegation, though it lay in entire obscurity. In that period, the sole endeavour of the Swamis had been to bring about complete self-effacement through God-realisation, and make themselves perfect conduits for the outflow of the spiritual energy that their Divine Master had roused in himself by his unparalleled life of spirituality. Indeed, that was the period of great conservation and of laying the foundation.

When the conservation was complete, the soul of the brotherhood burst forth through the voice of its leader Swami Vivekananda in the Parliament of Religions at Chicago, for

the first time. The dynamism of his message and the puissant soul of the messenger himself were so telling that the whole of the civilised world could not help from being stirred to listen him. Both the message and the messenger at once became known to all, in the year 1893. With this the period of conservation and obscurity ended, and a new chapter was opened. From that time forward till 1902 which marks the close of the earthly career of the great Swami, the sole endeavour of Swami Vivekananda and his brother disciples had been to deliver the great message of spirituality and harmony of their Master and to give start to a huge tidal wave of spiritual energy that may one day engulf the whole of this earth. During this first period of radiation, Swami Vivekananda and the other Swamis travelled through many lands, both of the East and of the West, strewed broadcast the message of their Master, and showed by their wonderful life that religion is not merely a matter of faith and God is not a make-belief, but religion is life, is being and becoming,—and God can be rendered into as much a permanent factor of our consciousness as any experience of this objective world, nay even more,—God is the basic reality of Life, the central pivot of the Universe ! It is known to all that copy-book maxims produce but little permanent effect upon the human mind, and the empty logomachy of theologians can make no man religious. It is only life which can produce life. The life that was breathed by Sri Ramakrishna into his disciples began to have fine efflorescence through their lives in turn. All those who came into close contact with these wonderful spiritual souls, could not but be warmed up by their fire of spirituality and renunciation, and thus the spiritual progeny of Sri Ramakrishna began to grow, or may we be permitted to say, there began the recruiting of soldiers for the spiritual army of the Master to combat with the forces of darkness and degeneracy which were found let loose in human society. Indeed, but for Sri Ramakrishna and his disciples, who could have rehabilitated the truth of spirituality and religion in human society in these days of materialism and empirical test ? With the advancement of material science and its importunate demand for experimentation, the religions of faith were shaken to their very foundations, the doctrine and dogmas of the churches were being pulverised under its sledge-hammer-blows, and the popular mind was swinging between the two extremes of credulity or faith and incredulity or atheism. At this juncture, it was the

appearance of Sri Ramakrishna and his disciples that saved the situation by holding out the redeeming light of *true* religion,—not the religion of the theologians,\*but the religion of God-communion and God-realisation. Making religion their profession and means of livelihood, and being unable to rise to the true demand of religion, the theologians of all religions always tried to compromise the real soul of religion with their own life, by obscuring the texts of their scriptures with false interpretations, and deluded their respective votaries by saying that religion consists simply in the pinning of one's faith to the letters of the scriptures, in the observances of certain laws of ethics and in becoming gentle sheep of their fold. This sort of religion cannot always satisfy the demands of the ever-growing rational faculty of man. So it is but natural that in these days of empiricism man should ask for concrete proof of the reality of the articles of faith. The message of Vedanta and of universal harmony that Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda preached to the world at once satisfied the utmost demands of human reason. They first showed that God and truths of religion are realisable and ought to be realised in life, if one aspires to be truly religious ; mere passive faith in God or dogmas of the church cannot save a man from the sufferings and bondages of life. Faith is, no doubt, the starting point of religion, provided it is dynamic in its assertion on conduct and influences the entire outlook of life of a man. But that is just the beginning of religion, and if faith is really dynamic, it must gradually mature into *Bhakti*, *Jnana* and *Yoga*, ultimately culminating in God-realisation and self-effacement. As the Sruti says—  
 श्रद्धाभक्तिज्ञानयोगादेवेहि  
 These Swamis first realised God themselves and showed to the world how that realisation is possible for all. They further proved that religion never contradicts reason, but fulfils and transcends it. They showed again by their precepts and practice that as there is one God, so there is but *one* Religion, and that is the Absolute Religion of God-realisation,—it is the transcendental state of consciousness beyond all reason and sense-perception, beyond all conditions of time, space and causation, and as such there cannot be any variety there ; but when the same Absolute Truth descends to the plane of relativity and is perceived by the human mind through its innate limitations, it assumes multifold aspects, and these are the many religions of the world. And so, in reality, there is absolutely no contradiction or conflict between religion and

religion inasmuch as they are but so many approaches, or so many paths leading to the same hill-top of God-realisation on which is situated the real temple of God.

To India herself, the message of Swami Vivekananda was much more life-giving and dynamic in its effect. It has produced a new epoch in her history, and all those who are wide-awake to the current of thought that has enlivened the modern generation, know it fully how much life the Swamiji has breathed into her almost corpse-like body and has brought out the present revivification. Almost all the master-minds of India that have preceded him, beginning from the early days of the nineteenth century, were outlandish in their inspiration and alien in their outlook. It was Sri Ramakrishna who for the first time exhibited to the outside world, the spiritual soul of Indian culture and the unfathomable depth of the Sanatana Dharma. Once Swami Vivekananda spoke referring to the mind of his Master that it was vast like the sky and deep like the ocean, and we may add that it was the true and concrete presentation of the all-comprehensiveness and profundity of this Soul of India. And perhaps to show the singular nature of this grandeur of the Hindu Soul, the Master chose to remain unlettered, kept his mind unsophisticated and untarnished by what is commonly called Modernism. But history records that before the magic of his wonderful mind, the most up-to-date men like Keshab Chandra Sen or Protap Chandra Mazumdar felt charmed and captivated, nay even humbled, and a current of his magnetic influence even travelled across the seas and touched powerful minds like that of Prof. Max Muller. And as it has been already said, Swami Vivekananda disseminated broadcast only the message of this wonderful man whom he considered as the manifestation of that Ancient Soul—*Purusha Purana*—who graces this mother Earth of ours from time to time whenever there arises the need for a new adjustment of life and for a religious revival.

The second chapter of the history of the Ramakrishna Mission covers a short period of nine years of ministration by the great Swami. During this short period, he delivered his message to the world at large and to India in particular, and showed her the path of redemption. At home, he opened the eyes of the country to the inestimable treasures that lie buried under the debris of ages, and exhorted his countrymen to claim them as their rightful heirs. And thus he gave

birth to that spirit of nationalism which is pulsating so vigorously throughout the land to-day. To the outside world he showed the glory of our Indian culture and Vedic religion, and asserted in unerring terms that they stand, at the present day, in need of the spiritual culture of India as a correlative and as complementary to their own. But his time was too short and he knew full well the limit of the period of his ministration : he had to crowd all his messages and work within the short period of nine years. He often used to say, "I have no time to give finish to my utterances. I have a message and I must deliver it as quickly as possible, as I am to hurry back." And indeed this second period of the life of the Mission was mainly occupied by the deliverance of his message. Still, during his life-time, he first permanently established the Headquarters of the organisation in the present Belur Math near Calcutta and opened four more centres of activity, one in Madras, another in Benares, a third in Murshidabad, and lastly in Mayavati in the Himalayas, with the help of his brother-disciples. Besides these he started also two centres in America, one in New York and another in San Francisco under the charge of Swami Abhedananda and Swami Turiyananda respectively. During the days of his *parivrajaka* life, he once remarked, "I am now conserving energy. One day I shall burst upon the society like a bomb-shell." And truly he *did* burst like a bomb-shell, but when the bursting took place, the world was dazzled by the splendour of the light, and at that time it could not estimate what mass of energy he had let loose into the society. Now that his spirit has left its earthly tabernacle and the dazzling light has been screened from our vision by time, we are slowly realising the significance and power of that energy.

The Swami passed away on the 4th of July, 1902. For the time being, a gloom of uncertainty fell upon the brotherhood. Everybody felt as if the fly-wheel of the life of the organisation was going to be stopped. But in vain cannot be the advent of souls like Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, and their divine force cannot be so little in its effect. The gloom was dispelled and the mist was scattered, and the ship of the Ramakrishna Mission was found plying quite safely in its course under a master helmsman in the late Swami Brahmanandaji of beloved memory. The third chapter of this

Mission opens with Swami Brahmanandaji as the leader and guide of the organisation. Next to the great Swamiji the hope and aspirations of Sri Ramakrishna rested upon Swami Brahmananda, who was considered by the brotherhood as the *Mānasaputra* of the great Master. Sri Ramakrishna used to say of Swami Brahmananda that he was one born perfect (a *Nitya Siddha*) and he possessed the administrative genius of a king (*Rajabuddhi*). And indeed the expansion and organisation that were effected in the Mission during his leadership speak volumes about his administrative qualities. Swami Vivekananda himself knew full well the great capacity of this brother-disciple of his, and left the whole task of organisation and consolidation of the work of the brotherhood in his hand even during his life-time. When Swami Vivekananda attained Mahasamadhi, the Mission possessed only about five or six centres and its strength consisted of twenty-five monastic members at the most. But under the fostering care and assiduity of Swami Brahmanandaji who was commonly known in the brotherhood as Sri Maharajji, the Mission grew into a mighty organisation, great in every respect and phenomenal in its expansion. For twenty years, from 1902 to 1922, the Mission was under the guidance of this great man, and during this period, the organisation grew into nearly fifty centres spreading all over India, Ceylon, Burma and Federated Malay States, and many foreign centres also sprung up, and the strength rose from twenty-five to three hundred and fifty. Under his inspiration these three hundred and fifty breathed like one man and nothing was too difficult or too hazardous for them to perform if they would once get the command from Sri Maharajji. Perhaps few leaders were more loved and adored by his followers than Swami Brahmanandaji. In fact everybody felt, during his life-time, that he was the organisation itself, as if he filled, by his intelligence and spirit, the entire body of the brotherhood. Every limb so closely felt the quickening impulse emanating from him that, at that time, though the Mission did not possess very many aspects of a great organisation, yet it can be said safely that there were very few organisations which could rival the Ramakrishna Mission in points of harmony, unity of purpose and co-ordination. His power of unification was simply marvellous, his knowledge of the organisation both individually and collectively was very thorough, and his decisions used to

be so masterly that they could not be equalled or substituted by any other.

This third epoch of the history of the Ramakrishna Mission is chiefly marked by expansion and organisation. The great impetus that Swami Vivekananda gave to the national life, and his ideas which were strewn broadcast in the country, first produced the great upheaval of nationalism in Bengal in the years 1905-06 and brought about such a great change in the outlook of life that young Bengal unhesitatingly made *him* the hero and ideal of their life. His words of renunciation and service were taken up by them as their watchword. And thus many young souls of Bengal turned towards the Belur Math for the waters of life and inspiration. In other parts of India, the clarion call of the great Swami did not fall on deaf ears. Everywhere the Hindus were awakened to a sense of appreciation of their past heritages and to the needs of the present time. And naturally from everywhere calls upon the Ramakrishna Mission to open its centres of activities began to grow more and more numerous and importunate in demand. And thus slowly the field of activity of the Mission began to get enlarged and complex in its nature. What Swami Vivekananda dreamed but could not materialise in his life-time, was given a tangible shape by the genius of Swami Brahmanandaji. If Sri Ramakrishna is the soul of the Ramakrishna Mission, if Swami Vivekananda is the dreamer and founder of the same, Swami Brahmanandaji is the organiser and consolidator of the brotherhood.

With the Mahasamadhi of Swami Brahmanandaji in the year 1922, the Mission has entered the fourth chapter of its history. The momentum that it gathered during the life-time of its former President is still carrying it on and the process of expansion is going on in an undiminished way. The centres have grown from fifty to ninety-four, and the strength also has increased to four hundred and a half, and the demand upon its work and workers is ever growing. It feels to-day more keenly perhaps than ever before the truth of the old saying that "harvest is plenty but labourers are few". So upon entering this new period of life, the authorities of the Mission felt an imperative need to reorganise and consolidate it more effectively to carry on its mission of *Sita* and *Seva*. Hence was the holding of the convention of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission.

It often happens with the efflux of time, that when an organisation grows in its extensity of life and work, its intensity decreases, and its firm hold upon the ideal is slowly loosened, and therefore the leaders of the organisation find it expedient to hold such conferences and conventions from time to time to muster all the different straggling forces to revivify and intensify the collective consciousness and bring about a consolidation of the organisation. This used to be the case with all ancient religious brotherhoods like Hinduism, Buddhism and Christianity, as the Secretary of the Mission, Swami Saradanandaji, remarked in his opening speech. The Mission tried to adopt the same old path. In the case of an individual struggling for the realisation of the ideal, it is often found imperative to recount the conduct of the past in order to shape the plan of the future, through the process of self-analysis and self-determination. This is also true of a body of individuals organised for the achievement of a great purpose. These conventions and conferences are simply meant for that. And after going through the recent sessions, all the members of the Mission felt that they *have* achieved a *great* thing for the betterment of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission.

In the first place, as the representatives of the different centres, the senior Swamis of the Mission and many monastic members of the order assembled together in such a large number for the first time, they got the best opportunity of knowing each other better than before. Further the comprehensive nature of the organisation was brought home to the mind of each individual member very vividly. Thirdly, the collective consciousness and spirit of brotherhood that was roused in this congregation was very telling in its effect. Very many important resolutions were passed by the assembly for better consolidation and more effective working of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission. The one point towards which the mind of the entire assembly gravitated was to subordinate expansion to consolidation, work to the right spirit, the practical to the ideal, in short, *Seva to Siva*. Expansion and growth is good, because it is the sign of life, but it is the life that should expand and there must not be any expansion by accretive growth : work is good, because no life is possible without it, but it should be the expression of the spirit within and not merely the frenzied dance of a morbid frame or the uncontrolled activity of a delirious patient ; *Seva* is glorious,

because it kills our selfishness and purifies our heart, but it can do so only when it is done for the Siva in man ; otherwise it brings bondage and increases egoism. Further, the convention revealed to the members of the Math and Mission another great fact, that the spirit of Sri Ramakrishna and of Swami Vivekananda is still working at the back of the organisation and will achieve everything that has to be achieved. The best worker would be only he who would bring about complete self-effacement and dedicate himself as an humble instrument in their hands. Otherwise, what explanation can we offer for such wonderful feats as have been achieved by some of the most humble workers of the Mission without any pretension to learning and other qualifications ? All those who were present in the convention felt the spirit of the Master unmistakably. The convention was thus successful in many ways. It has given a fresh imperus to the organisation for the life of service and worship, and we pray to the Almighty to give it the proper strength and clarity of vision to follow the Light that once appeared in Dakshineswar and Whose splendour has filled now the whole world.

Om Santi !

Om Santi !!

Om Santi !!!

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## NEWS AND REPORTS

Swami Sharvananda who has been the President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission in Madras since 1911 and has been editing the *VEDANTA KESARI* from its very start is retiring from work after nineteen years of strenuous labour. He means to lead at present a life of perfect solitude and retirement.

Swami Yatiswarananda who has been in charge of the Ramakrishna Ashrama in Bombay for nearly the last two years has come over to take charge of the Math and Mission in Madras. He has spent eight years of his monastic life in South India and has an intimate knowledge of several of its parts. He is the late editor of the *Prabuddha Bharata* and is well-known for his scholarship and literary abilities. He was also intimately connected with the editorial work and the publication of the *VEDANTA KESARI* for a long period. Our Journal will appear under his editorship from May next. All official correspondence must hereafter be addressed to him. We pray to the Lord to crown his work with complete success.

Swami Sharvananda takes this opportunity of expressing his deep sense of gratitude and sincere thanks for all the innumerable tokens of cordiality, help, and co-operation which he has received at the hands of his numerous friends in the Presidencies of Madras and Bombay, in other parts of India, and in Ceylon, Burma and the Federated Malay States and which enabled him to carry on his work all these years. May the Lord's blessings be upon them all !

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### THE RAMAKRISHNA MATH AND MISSION CONVENTION

The Ramakrishna Math and Mission convention which was held for the first time in April last at Belur Math on the banks of the Ganges in the district of Howrah was a unique and momentous gathering. It was largely attended by both the monastic and lay members of the Order. Ninety-four centres of the Math and Mission which are being managed by the Order had sent their representatives to attend the convention.

The convention opened on the morning of the first of April with *homa*, chanting of *mantras*, and devotional songs. At 7 A. M. His Holiness Srimat Swami Saradanandaji, the Chairman of the Reception Committee, delivered his address of welcome which was listened to with rapt attention by the audience. He said that the movement started by Swami Vivekananda in the name of his Master had already passed through the first two stages of opposition and indifference and now has come the time when the ideas of the Mission are largely accepted. The Brotherhood had done excellent work but greater work yet remains to be done. The success of the movement in the future depends

entirely on humility, the right and intensive spirit of work, the readiness of the members of the Brotherhood to merge their individuality in their Ideal, and their becoming fired with zeal for united thought and action. A copy of the address in Bengali was also read out.

Then came the speech of His Holiness Srimat Swami Sivanandaji, the President of the Convention. It was read out by Swami Paramananda who had come from America as a representative of the Mission centres there. The speech explained in brief the objects of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission which were started by Swami Vivekananda with the two-fold ideal of attaining one's own liberation and working for the good of humanity. The Math and Mission are not two separate bodies. The distinction between the two is a purely technical one made for facilities of work. Renunciation and service are both to be combined and character is to be cast in the mould of Sri Ramakrishna's life by following the paths of *Bhakti*, *Jnana*, *Karma* and *Yoga*. Work is not to degenerate into a form of mere social activity but must be welded to worship. The President blessed those present in the name of his Master, Sri Ramakrishna. A Bengali version of the speech was also read out. The meeting adjourned at 11 A. M., after the election of members to the Subjects Committee which was to meet and discuss various topics concerning the work and other matters, with a view to form resolutions and place them for consideration before the Trustees and the Governing Body of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission.

The convention lasted for eight days. At the regular sittings, reports of 113 centres were read. The reports contained information about the various forms of work done by the Math and Mission through all its branches—preaching, publication, education and philanthropy.

The regular sittings were interspersed with three public meetings in which various learned speakers, monastic and lay, spoke on the ideals and activities of the Ramakrishna Mission. Among the speakers were Swamis Saradananda, Akhandananda, Sudhananda, Sharvananda, Paramananda, Madhavananda, Vativarananda, Jnaneshwarananda, Nirvedhananda, Nikhilananda, Vipulananda and Principal Kamakhyanath Mitra. All the speakers dealt with the principles of Sanatana Dharma nanda, Nikhilananda Vipulananda, and Principal Kamakhyanath Mitra. All the speakers dealt with the principles of Sanatana Dharma in the light of the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. Public meetings were also held in which lectures on sanitation and social service were delivered by eminent men.

The convention came to a close with a short speech by the President who invoked the blessings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda on the Brotherhood.

Never before in the history of the Order has there been such a unique gathering of monastic and lay members from all the quarters of India and abroad. The movement has grown considerably in extent and responsibilities. The convention afforded an excellent opportunity for the comparing of notes among the various workers and closer co-ordination of the various branches of activities for the purpose of improvement, consolidation and expansion.

## MAHASAMADHI OF

## SWAMIS SUBHANANDA AND SATCHIDANANDA

We announce with deep feelings of sorrow the passing away of Swamis Subhananda and Satchidananda in April last.

Swami Subhananda, popularly known as Charu Babu, was one of the best and most capable workers of the Ramakrishna Mission. He was a disciple of Swami Vivekananda who, fired with the noble ideal of service, started the Ramakrishna Home of Service (*Sevashrama*) in Benares which is to-day one of the most noteworthy monuments of philanthropy in India.

Swami Satchidananda joined the Order of Sri Ramakrishna during the time of Swami Vivekananda. He was all along living a strict ascetic life. Possessed by a desire to live the life of a *Parivrajaka*, he travelled all over India on foot during a period of his life.

May the souls of the noble departed rest in peace at the feet of the Lord !



